

World reaction to shelter deaths and success of air attacks mean Bush may not wait

Bombing of bunker hastens land war

By PETER STOTHARD IN WASHINGTON
AND ROBIN OAKLEY IN LONDON

THE chances of an early ground war appeared to grow yesterday with reports that a third of Iraq's tanks in and near Kuwait had been destroyed. There were also suggestions in Washington that the timetable towards a land offensive had been accelerated after the deaths of hundreds of civilians in the bunker bombing in Baghdad on Tuesday.

Iraqi tanks, artillery and hardened aircraft shelters are being destroyed at a rapidly increasing rate, reflecting the intensified bombardment of the occupying forces.

In Riyadh, Brigadier-General Richard Neal said that more than 1,300 of Iraq's 4,000 tanks, 1,100 of its 3,100 artillery pieces and 800 of its 2,800 armoured personnel carriers had been destroyed. That was nearly double the tally General Neal reported last week. British sources put the figure slightly lower.

The success of the allies' air power, backed up by artillery fire from batteries in Saudi Arabia and battleships in the Gulf, would appear to hasten the day when President Bush decides that the entrenched Iraqi army has been sufficiently devastated to make a relatively bloodless ground offensive possible.

Last week, Mr Bush said that he was prepared to let the air war continue "for a while".

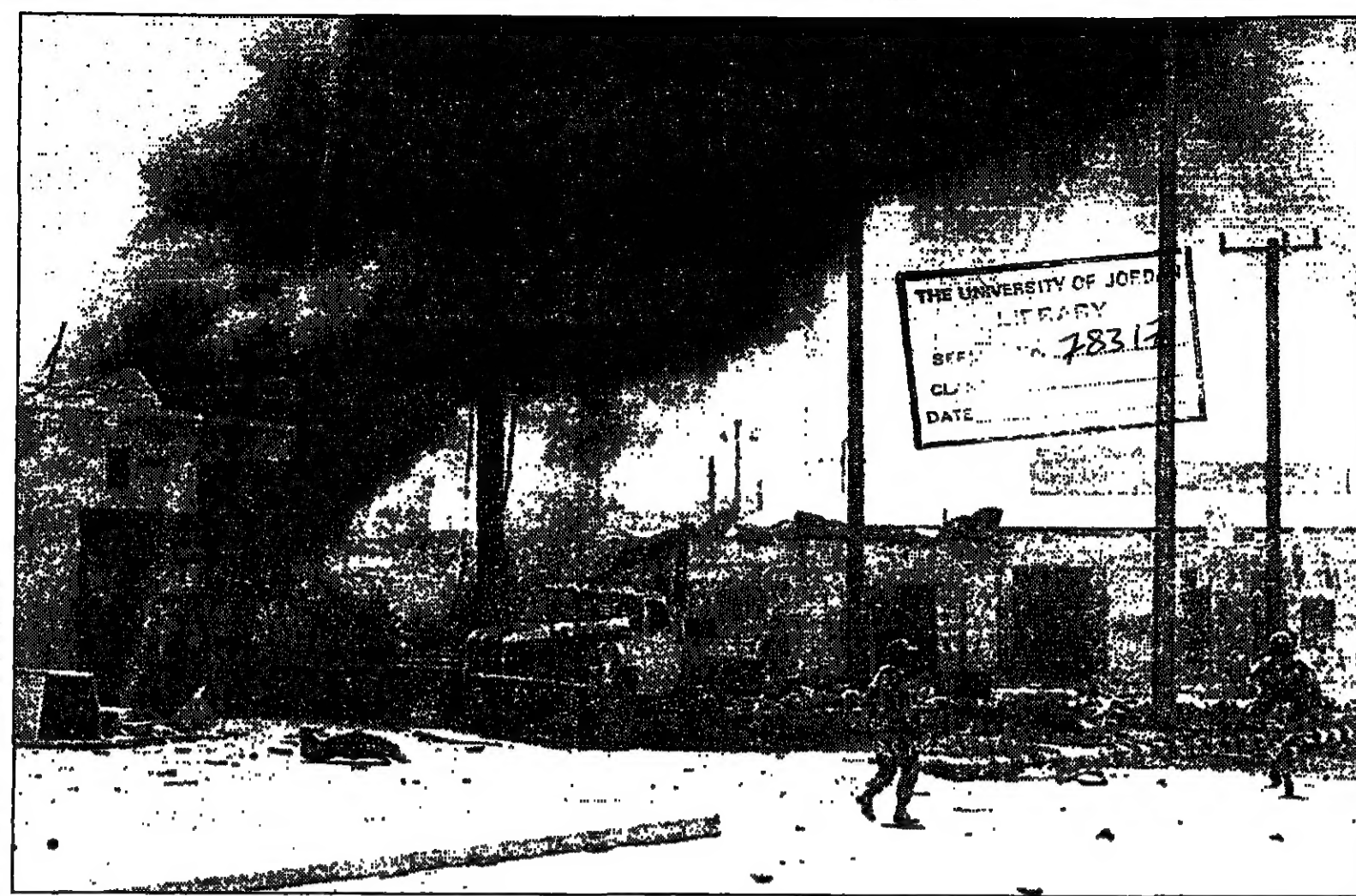
after his military chiefs had advised him to wait a month before launching a ground war. But the results of the attacks on the forces in Kuwait, coupled with the public relations fallout from the bombing of the bunker on Tuesday mean he is now unlikely to wait that long.

America is reassessing its targeting to try to avoid similar public relations disaster, but officials were pessimistic about how far real improvements in air tactics could be made. One idea being considered is publicising attacks on certain "dual use" targets in advance. But prior knowledge of bombing raids would greatly assist the enemy in shooting down the planes or missiles used.

The political rhetoric is also becoming harder to keep consistent. Mr Bush has made a central point that this war will not be another Vietnam. The prime meaning is that America will not fight with one hand behind its back and that the commanders will have a free hand to win the war as fast as they can. The president has insisted, for example, that the presence of hostages or prisoners of war as "human shields" would not be allowed to push the allied forces into a premature land campaign.

The second meaning of "no new Vietnam" is that the country will be spared the horrors of killing civilians, that the advances in technology and intelligence mean that a war machine can be destroyed without a Gulf War equivalent of "village burning". The early success of smart weapons and skilful "blood-free" public relations has played a big part in maintaining the high level of domestic support for Operation Desert Storm.

Defence department officials now say it was perhaps inevitable that President Saddam Hussein would show the political ruthlessness and skill to turn the allies' technological advantage against them, purposefully putting civilians in the path of laser-guided bombs.



In the firing line: Saudi and American troops patrolling near a vehicle repair shop hit by an Iraqi Scud in Hafir al-Batin, north-eastern Saudi Arabia

The officials add that if the White House is not careful, the president will appear to be more sensitive to the political fallout abroad from Arab civilian deaths than he is to the deaths of Americans placed in danger by Saddam.

Senior planners admit that this boosts the argument for an accelerated change of emphasis to diversionary tactics and to an earlier start for the ground war.

In London yesterday, the British war cabinet expressed their determination that the political difficulties created by the Amiriyah bombing should not be allowed to push the allied forces into a premature land campaign.

Mr Bush reassured the prime minister in a 15-minute telephone conversation yesterday of the validity of intelligence reports that the bunker in which hundreds of civilians died also housed an Iraqi command and communications centre.

Suspensions were voiced in the war cabinet that Saddam was sufficiently careless of Iraqi lives to be willing to risk allied forces into bombing other installations housing civilians to exploit the propaganda possibilities of further non-military casualties.

Kuwaitis 'crucified' by Iraqi troops

By RAY CLANCY
AND NICHOLAS WATT

KUWAITI resistance leaders responded yesterday to criticism of the allied bombing in Baghdad with tales of torture in Kuwait, where they said 65 civilians had been killed by the Iraqis over four days.

Iraqi troops were said to have crucified Kuwaitis and buried others alive. Soldiers were alleged to have slit 12 victims' throats and then cut off their heads. The dead were then placed in front of their homes and left for 36 hours.

Colonel Abdullah el-Kandari, of the Kuwaiti army, showed a video smuggled out of Kuwait in which a resistance member made the claims. In another case, the Iraqis nailed up a captured resistance fighter by his hands before drilling through his knees and head.

The colonel said Iraqis had executed 200 people in Kuwait since the beginning of the war in retaliation for allied bombing missions. "Two weeks ago, two people were executed just because they were not standing in the queue for taking gas cylinders," he said. The Iraqis were "getting very sensitive now, and after incidents they see along the road they will either take you to jail or execute you".

Resistance fighters had risked their lives to make the video, which was shot just before the start of the war four weeks ago. The blurred film was shot on the move or from a distance. It showed a resistance fighter dropping a petrol bomb from a bridge into an Iraqi army truck, which began swaying.

The 41-minute tape began with a statement by a resistance fighter with his face blacked out. "We will fight until the last drop of our blood. When they take people for interrogation, drunken guards beat those who are being interrogated. There are prostitutes dancing inside the interrogation halls."

From other sources there were claims that more than 250 Kuwaitis were killed on Sunday and their bodies mutilated.

Gloom as unemployment nudges 2 million mark

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

UNEMPLOYMENT is expected to breach the two million mark next month after government figures yesterday showing that unadjusted unemployment rose by almost 110,000 in January — the highest monthly increase for five years.

John Major, the prime minister, said he regretted the increase, and Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, used the sharp rise to 1.96 million jobsless to attack the government's economic policies.

The increase came as the Bank of England said there was "little sign" of a decline in Britain's underlying inflation, implicitly casting doubt on the prime minister's repeated assertions that interest rates would be cut only when underlying inflation was clearly on the way down.

City expectations that seasonally adjusted unemployment — usually seen as the best guide to the jobs trend — would rise by up to 100,000 proved false as, after allowing for the usual rise in January, adjusted unemployment rose by 46,200 to 1,888,500 — the tenth month it has gone up.

The rise in unadjusted unemployment was 109,500, but the effects of Christmas and the new year, plus the winter weather, make the process of adjustment particularly difficult and the underlying trend is still put at rising by about 60,000 a month.

Given the scale of job losses feeding into the official figures over the next few months, headline unemployment will inevitably rise beyond two million. Government officials expect that figure to be breached next month. Unemployment continued to increase most sharply in the South and the West Midlands, with the lowest rises in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Unemployment is growing as a political issue, and in the Commons Mr Major told Mr Kinnock that "although I regret the rise in unemployment" Labour would have to concede that the British level was well below the European average. Mr Kinnock retorted that, after presiding over two periods of sharply rising unemployment within a decade, the Conservatives would always be known as the "party of unemployment".

Michael Howard, the employment secretary, said that the prospects of those seeking work would only improve if those in jobs moderated their pay settlements. Tony Blair, Labour's employment spokesman, described the figures as grim and said the underlying trend was appalling, with more bad news on the way.

For the unions, John Edmunds, of the GMB general union, said the figures demonstrated that every quarter of 1 per cent fall in inflation was

being paid for by 100,000 jobs, while for employers the CBI said that the jobsless trend was firmly upwards.

Employment in manufacturing industry is now at its lowest since 1959, and though job vacancies rose by 15,100 in January, officials admitted this was primarily because the government was seeking people through job centres to carry out the 10-yearly census of population on April 21. Average earnings remained high, increasing for the third month running at an underlying rate of 9.75 per cent.

Further economic difficulties were signalled by separate figures from mortgage lenders showing that a record number of homes were repossessed last year and more people fell into mortgage arrears as a result of high interest rates and the slump in property prices. Almost 44,000 homes were repossessed.

Britain in recession, page 5
Tory downfall?, page 14
Output falls, page 23
Comment, page 25

SATURDAY

But why can't we go out?

Where to take the children over half term? *The Times* has all the answers in a special full-page guide WEEKEND LIVING

In Ben Elton's direction



The comedian with a passion for writing talks to Sean French about his venture into theatre directing SATURDAY REVIEW

Meanwhile on the pitch...

England rugby players have been in the headlines over their appearances in advertisements: tomorrow they have some real business against Scotland SPORT

Just, justified or plain wrong

Clifford Longley explores the varying Gulf war attitudes of Cardinal Hume, Dr George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury-designate, and the Pope

A different kind of madness

The problem was psychological disorder. The cure was called deep sleep treatment. The outcome was 24 dead patients. William Hobson explores a bizarre tragedy SATURDAY REVIEW

Food (and wine) for thought

Jonathan Meades finds the North-East extremely filling. Robin Young finds something to wash it down with WEEKEND LIVING

Big freeze nearly over

Do you think the thaw has started?



Temperatures, which have dropped regularly overnight to minus 12C (10F), are expected to rise as high as 10C (50F) in some parts of the country tomorrow. The London Weather Centre said: "The big thaw is on." Page 22

Robbers routed

A gang who abducted Viscount Stormont on his way to work and then tried to open the safe of his London home was foiled by Lady Stormont who chased the robbers with a broomstick. Page 3

Dear's 'failure'

Geoffrey Dear, the former chief constable of the West Midlands, failed to give specific instructions for the headquarters of his serious crime squad to be locked when he disbanded the unit, a report has concluded. Page 7

Union boss

If Bill Morris wins the TGWU election for general secretary, he will become Britain's first black union boss. Kate Muir met him in the first week of his campaign. Page 18

INDEX

Arts	19,20
Books, marriages, deaths	17
Business	29,30
Classified	17,28,32-34
Court & social	16
Crosswords	17,22
Law Report	31
Leading articles	15
Letters	32
Motoring	16
Obituaries	21
TV & radio	22
Weather	22

Poll tax exemption for Gulf forces is agreed

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE government is to spend up to £14 million on a scheme to grant the 40,000 members of the British armed forces serving in the Gulf exemption from the poll tax.

Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, will tell the Commons next week that councils must exempt service personnel from the tax from the moment they leave Britain. Local authorities will be compensated in full for poll tax losses.

The decision, endorsed by the cabinet yesterday, follows mounting pressure on the government to act. One soldier was reportedly handed a poll tax demand while he was on a training exercise in full gas protection kit and another was served with a summons at a forward position. Members

of the armed forces have continued to receive poll tax bills even though the government asked councils in November to grant immediate exemption to anyone sent to the Gulf. The November circular was only advisory, however.

Rushmore council, which covers Aldershot in Hampshire, the army's largest garrison, said yesterday that its poll tax bills would go up by an extra £14 a head from April.

A Commons motion calling for poll tax exemption for Gulf forces, tabled by David Blunkett, Labour's local government spokesman, had attracted the support of 113 MPs, including two Conservatives. Mr Blunkett said: "It looks as if the pressure has begun to have an effect."

Huck Finn is found in a trunk (ain't no joke)

From CHARLES BRENNER IN NEW YORK

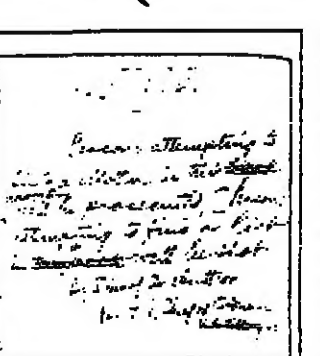
A HOLLYWOOD librarian has found the long-lost manuscript of the first half of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the novel widely seen as the most important in American literature.

The scholarly world has been staggered by the discovery in an attic trunk of the 665 handwritten pages, which vary extensively from the standard text. "I'm stupefied," said Kenneth Sanderson of the Mark Twain Project at Berkeley. "Huckleberry Finn is the nearest thing we have to the Great American Novel in this country. We had all given up on the manuscript long ago."

Even the author thought it had been destroyed.

The papers, which disappeared over a century ago, were found by a 62-year-old librarian who had inherited the trunk from her grandfather, James Fraser Gluck, of Buffalo, New York. Gluck was a friend of Twain's and a collector of manuscripts. The second half of the manuscript is held by the Buffalo Library.

The library yesterday suggested it was the rightful owner, saying Gluck, who died at the age of 45, had taken the papers home and forgot to return them. The trunk's owners said they were sympathetic to reuniting the manuscript with the other half. Sotheby's, which has been



Novel find: Mark Twain, and page one of Huckleberry Finn

trying to determine ownership, called the find the most valuable literary discovery in America. "The only thing comparable to it I can think of would be an original Shakespeare manuscript," said Paul Needham, head of the book department. Twain, the pen-name of

Samuel Clemens, revised much of his work between 1876, when he started writing the tale, and the novel's first publication in England in 1884. The written version includes a new long episode as well as thousands of revisions which reveal Twain's creative methods. He changed the opening lines three times, before arriving at the final version: "You don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, but that ain't no matter." On its first American publication, however, Twain's book was greeted with ridicule by the literary establishment.

IN 1989,
TWENTY THREE
MILLION
ROMANIAN GOT
THE
SAME CHRISTMAS
PRESENT:
THE DEATH OF
THE
CEAUSESCUS.



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GQ. The men's magazine with an I.Q. March issue out now.

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Britain in recession: as debts soar and jobs go, families face a harsh new world

Lenders repossess record 43,890 homes in past year

By CHRISTOPHER WARMAN, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

A RECORD 43,890 homes were repossessed last year and thousands more people fell into serious arrears.

High interest rates and the property slump hit homebuyers harder than at any time in the last two decades, the Council of Mortgage Lenders disclosed in statistics published yesterday. They showed that 27,330 dwellings were repossessed by mortgage lenders in the second half of 1990, against 16,560 in the first half.

The yearly total of 43,890 was the highest since figures were first gathered in 1979, representing 0.47 per cent of all outstanding loans. The total for 1989 was 15,810, or 0.17 per cent.

Mark Boleat, director general of the council, said yesterday that he expected repossession figures to increase in the first six months of this year, but he suggested that the figures for arrears had probably reached a plateau.

Mr Boleat admitted that in retrospect a few lenders would

say that they might not have adopted strict enough criteria in making loans at the peak of the property boom in 1987 and 1988, but that borrowers did not take enough care.

The council said the number of loans 6-12 months in arrears increased to 123,110 (1.31 per cent) at the end of December 1989, compared with 87,790 at the end of June. The number of arrears of over 12 months rose from 21,580 to 36,100 (0.38 per cent) during the same period.

Mr Boleat said the worst effects were felt in London, the South-East and East Anglia, where the housing market had suffered most severely in the slump. The high level of interest rates, which had remained at 14.5 per cent or more since November 1989, had taken its toll.

A second factor was that the decline in turnover in the housing market meant that borrowers in difficulties were unable to sell their homes to buy a cheaper one. That was exacerbated by the third fac-

tor, the decline in house prices in some regions, the council said. That decline "may be an important factor in the increase in the proportion of possessions that do not involve court proceedings."

"If people believe that house prices are falling and will continue to fall they are more likely to hand in the keys to the lender." The proportion of possessions not involving court proceedings is normally about one third, but in 1990 rose to one half.

The council also blamed the increase in repossessions on the rise in unemployment, the diminishing importance of mortgage interest tax relief, and changes in the social security system. Until 1986, income support was available to cover all the mortgage interest of qualifying families. Since then, income support has covered only half the interest due for the first 16 weeks, with full support available thereafter.

Mr Boleat said building societies, banks and centralised lenders would continue to help people with genuine difficulties in meeting repayments and would do all they could to avoid repossessing homes.

Eviction threat as dream is ended

By PAUL WILKINSON

ELLEN Skyrme was a classic example of Thatcherite Britain. From a working-class background and brought up in a council house, she was determined to become a home-owning entrepreneur.

By the time she was 25 she was running a south coast building business with 46 staff and looking forward to living in a home valued at a third of a million pounds. Today her business employs just Mrs Skyrme and her husband Ian and is near bankruptcy. The taxman says she and her firm owe £30,000 and she faces losing her house.

Rising interest rates and falling house prices mean that the home they bought for £71,000 three years ago to convert and sell at a profit has left them with an unrepayable mortgage of £225,000. Last week the Mortgage Corporation gave them a month to find a solution or face repossession.

Mrs Skyrme, now 27, said: "We don't know whether to fight them or just hand over the keys. There is no way we can find the money unless a windfall comes our way." Trouble began soon after she took a £63,000 mortgage from Lloyds Bank for a cottage at

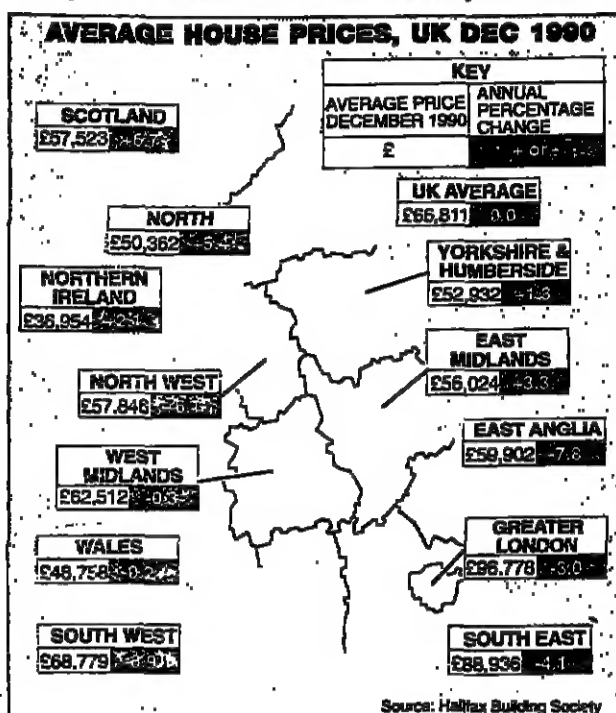


Backs to the wall: Mr and Mrs Skyrme outside the house at Middleton-on-Sea, which is facing repossession

Middleton-on-Sea, West Sussex. She and her husband began converting it into a four-bedroomed home.

In early 1988, estate agents valued the final product at £335,000 so the bank was happy to agree an unsecured overdraft for improvements. It is now for sale at £250,000, a price set by the depressed market. The overdraft rose to

£80,000 and interest brought monthly repayments to £4,000. By this time, small building businesses were doing badly and they could only offer the bank £1,000 monthly. By May 1990, missed repayments brought their overdraft to £125,000 and a new mortgage was the only way to reduce outgoings. The Mortgage Corporation then consolidated all their debts into one loan and topped it up to provide working capital. Their total borrowing rose to £225,000. Because they could now pay back at lower mortgage interest rates rather than overdraft rates, monthly repayments dropped to £2,600, but income fell. Mrs Skyrme has not taken a wage since last April and her husband is seeking any work. Last November they were warned of repossession proceedings but until last week the threat of eviction had been staved off. Mrs Skyrme, who explained her plight on a recent *Kilroy* television programme, blamed the government for encouraging people to become home-owners, then lifting interest rates. The government would have to pay "when we have to live off the state".



From a City bank to driving a minicab

By BILL FROST

ANTHONY Barrell hates Sunday nights. He sits at home dreading the prospect of work the next morning. There was a time, however, when he looked forward to the week to come. That was 18 months ago, before he lost his £35,000 a year job as operations manager with a City bank. He now drives a minicab in east London.

Mr Barrell, aged 43, well remembers the morning he was dismissed. "I was discussing salary increases for my 40 staff with management. Then they passed me a draft letter to read. It told me my contract was terminated. I felt as



Barrell: "They snuffed something out inside me"

though I had done ten rounds with a heavyweight boxer." With an £80,000 mortgage on his Hampshire home Mr Barrell needed a job quickly. "It is a dreadful feeling when you are told that you are surplus to requirements. But there is no time for wallowing in it. I found a job with a small go-ahead company."

The job did not work out. Mr Barrell was desperate. As his anxiety mounted he scaled down his aspirations. "I saw an ad placed by a minicab firm in London. I just knew there was no alternative," he said. He is resentful towards his former employers. "They snuffed something out inside me. I had always been loyal and done my best. Those qualities, that spirit I once had, have been damaged badly."

Mr Barrell is still applying for jobs. "Somewhere out there is the right job, and I am going to get it."

For every vacancy a rush of applicants

By TIM JONES

EMPLOYMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE job, for a word processor operator with knowledge of French, had been in the window for only two hours and the staff at the Alfred Marks employment agency in Victoria, central London, thought they were under siege. In that time, more than 30 people applied for the £15,000-a-year job.

They included teachers, an accountant, highly qualified secretaries who had been made redundant, and people with hardly any knowledge of French. Many were willing to take a considerable drop in salary to secure the job.

It was a clear indication of the worsening unemployment affecting London, where, according to Tony Blair, Labour's employment spokesman, 30 claimants are now chasing every vacancy.

In Norwich, where Mr Blair said 26 people were chasing every Jobcentre vacancy, Alfred Marks had to remove a card for three part-time building labourers because so many people, some with degrees, had applied. Another advertisement in Norwich for a part-time receptionist elicited more than 60 applicants on the first day.

As the political battle sharpens, Michael Howard, the employment secretary, has been fighting a rearguard action against the figures put out by Mr Blair and this week's analysis by *The Times*, which showed that unemployment in the year to December increased by 32.4 per cent in Conservative seats.

Mr Howard suggested, for example, the analysis failed to emphasize that in some areas, such as Berkshire, where *The Times* said unemployment had increased by 61.5 per cent, the base had been very low. "The reality is that the unemployment rate in Berkshire is even now only 3 per cent," he said. "In the Crawley travel-to-work area, the rate has increased by 82.7 per cent; in fact, it now stands at 2 per cent."

Ivor Crewe, page 14

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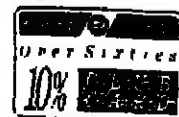
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مكتبة ابن النجار

Wife chases gang after robbers kidnap viscount

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

LONDON detectives were last night hunting for a gang who abducted Viscount Stormont, son of a former Northern Ireland minister, on his way to work, stole his keys and tried to open the safe at his southwest London home.

The robbers were foiled when Lady Stormont set off an alarm at the house in Tooting. After a struggle she chased them into the street in her nightdress with a broomstick, planning to attack their car. The raid yielded the gang of three or four about £80 to £100 in cash.

Several hours later Lord Stormont, aged 34, was found a few miles away after freeing himself from a van where he had been kept handcuffed. As he was reunited with his wife, a senior detective described the robbery as a well-planned and "horrible" crime which went wrong. The Stormonts

two children, both aged under five, were in the house when the robbers struck.

Later, still wearing the handcuffs which police were trying to cut off his wrists, Lord Stormont said that his wife had been very brave and described his experiences. He said that he was on his way from his terrace home in Drakefield Road, Tooting, to catch a train for work yesterday morning when he was stopped.

"A man walked up to me and said he wanted to talk to me. Before I knew what was happening the rest of them turned up. One of the first things they did was to put my hands behind my back. Hey presto! I was in the back of a Transit van."

"It appears they then invaded my house and then they took me for an involuntary tour of London," said Lord

Stormont, a valuer at Christie's.

"They said they were going to my house. My thoughts were, I just hope they don't hurt my children." He would not say whether there were any threats.

About 45 minutes after he was abducted, the robbers arrived at his house. Two men, both with their faces concealed, let themselves in and detectives think a third was waiting outside in a red Fiat Uno. Lord Stormont's two children were with their nanny and Lady Stormont, aged 32, was still asleep.

Police think that Lord Stormont had given the robbers a combination for the small family safe but the combination did not work and the men, possibly armed, went to Lady Stormont.

She said: "I woke up when a man jumped on me. I opened my eyes. One man was above me and the other was by the door and he came to the bed. One had a balaclava on over his face and the other had a scarf over his face."

The men, both in their 20s, showed Lady Stormont her husband's wallet. She said that she did not know where he was and she was in a state of shock. "They had surprise on their side," Lady Stormont said. "They wanted me to get up and open our very small safe which does not have very much in it. I said I would do it and as I was getting out of bed I pressed the panic button."

They noticed but I was quicker than they were."

One of the men shouted that the alarm had gone off and one, cursing, gripped Lady Stormont in an armlock. "I told them it was wired up to the police and they would be here in a minute. They ran down the stairs out of the front door and I ran after them. I grabbed a duffel coat and a broom. I was going to break the window of the car. They had already gone."

She memorised the registration number of the car as it disappeared and ran back indoors to write it down. Her children and their nanny, in her 20s, knew nothing of what had happened.

Lord Stormont, unaware of what had happened, got out of the van in a street in Streatham, still handcuffed. "I went to doors and found in this part of London in mid-morning no one was in."

Maureen Lowe, a local resident, thought from his appearance that he might be a criminal himself and would not let him into her house. Finally she took him to a neighbour to call the police.

As investigations began Det Superintendent Michael Shorter said that there was no evidence to link the crime to Northern Ireland or terrorism. He said that the gang had known Lord Stormont's routine and details of the house. Both the van and the Fiat car were stolen in south London last month.

Lady Stormont, he said, had shown great presence of mind. The robbers had not bargained for her putting up a fight or alerting the police.

Lord Stormont's father, the eighth Earl of Mansfield and Mansfield, was minister of state at the Northern Ireland Office from 1983 to 1984.

Lady Stormont, he said, had shown great presence of mind. The robbers had not bargained for her putting up a fight or alerting the police.



After the ordeal: Viscount Stormont, still shackled by handcuffs, with Lady Stormont at Tooting Bec police station

A man of career changes

By MICHAEL HORNE

THE amiable Viscount Stormont, known to his friends as Mungo, is son and heir to the 8th Earl of Mansfield and Mansfield, lord of Scone Palace in Perthshire, where the ancient kings of Scotland were crowned.

The old Etonian fluffed his law exams in 1978 at Magdalene College, Cambridge, describing the subject as "hideously complicated". He

found a job working in the wine department at Harrods. Later, he moved to customer relations with Air France before becoming head of Sotheby's sporting gun department in 1982. A good shot, he was reported as saying at the time that his only regret was having to work on the glorious twelfth.

In 1987 he went to Christie's where he spent a year acquainting himself with all departments before becoming a valuer.

Lord Stormont, aged 34, whose clubs include White's, the Turf and Pratt's, married Sophia Ashbrooke of St John, Jersey, in 1985. They have two children, Isabella, aged three, and William, aged two.

The family were long the owners of Robert Adam's neo-classical Kenwood.

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Neighbourhood forests planned for town-dwellers

By JOHN YOUNG

NINE community forests are to be developed on the edges of large population centres, the government announced yesterday. Tony Baldry, a junior environment minister, said he expected the scheme to cost about £70 million over a number of years.

The forest sites are Cleveland, Merseyside, Manchester, South Yorkshire, Nottingham, Bedford, Bristol, Swindon and south Hertfordshire. They will complement three forests designated last year in Staffordshire, Tyne and Wear and an area east of London.

The aim is to create well-wooded areas for recreation, wildlife, housing, industry and education. Each will contain forest, farmland, public open space and leisure facilities, with a ban on developments that would interfere with public access and enjoyment.

The programme is a joint venture by the Forestry Commission and the Countryside Commission, which has allocated £600,000 to establish "project teams" to consult farmers, landowners and local authorities. Each forest will

cover between 40 and 80 square miles, about half of which will eventually be wooded.

Sir Derek Barber, the Countryside Commission chairman, said yesterday that the planned forests were "a bold and imaginative vision, which the whole community can share in and help turn into reality."

"Together with all the local people we will change for the better the landscape close to major urban areas in England, and build a future for our children and our children's children," Sir Derek said.

Mr Baldry said that forests should be seen as more than just a source of timber or a scenic backdrop, but as a positive means of upgrading the landscape and providing important new opportunities for leisure and recreation.

Andrew Christie-Miller, chairman of Timber Growers United Kingdom, which represents private forestry interests, said, however, that without financial incentives the programme would be difficult to put into practice.



National Trust has record year

By MICHAEL MCCARTHY, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

ARGUMENTS over hunting and accusations of elitism did not prevent last year from being phenomenally successful for the National Trust, its director-general, Angus Stirling, said yesterday.

Membership passed two million, visitors to historic properties and estates exceeded ten million, fund-raising topped £6 million, and legacies were over £19 million — all record figures — Mr Stirling said. The trust's revenue for the year exceeded £70 million.

Membership stands at 2,031,743, and provision is already being made for three million. "By any standards, we have had a phenomenally successful year," he said.

The expansion came in spite of controversy, with a membership vote against deer hunting on trust land and claims from a trust council member, Rodney Legg, chairman of the Open Spaces Society, that the body was elitist. Mr Stirling said the attack was misguided.

Court says seaman must pay poll tax

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

A MERCHANT seaman who spends three quarters of the year on board his ship failed yesterday to win exemption from the poll tax.

At the High Court in London, Mr Justice Hutchison ruled that Neil Anderson, aged 31, of Keighley, West Yorkshire, must pay the tax because his ship, the Cunard freighter Atlantic Conveyor, was not his "sole or main residence". The judge overruled an earlier decision by the West Yorkshire Valuation and Community Charge Tribunal, which directed Bradford city council to remove Mr Anderson from the poll tax register.

The National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (NMT), which backed Mr Anderson, said that it would consider taking the case to the House of Lords.

Allowing an appeal by the council, the judge said that a merchant ship "plying the high seas" could not in law constitute a person's residence. Legal authorities had established that Mr Anderson's sole or main residence was his home because that was his home, which he left

only when his job compelled him to go to sea.

The tribunal had been wrong in confining its attention almost exclusively to the length of time that Mr Anderson spent at home compared with his time at sea. It should have taken into account that Mr Anderson regarded the house as his home, which is where his family lived and where he had security of tenure.

Guidance issued by the environment department requires local authorities to exempt people who spend more than six months at a time away from home. The court was told that Mr Anderson spent three months at sea and a month at home.

The department said that it was studying the ruling and added: "We have always made it clear that time alone should not be the only factor considered. Community charge registration officers should also look to see where a person has their real home, where they keep their possessions and where they live when they are not working."

Law Report, page 31

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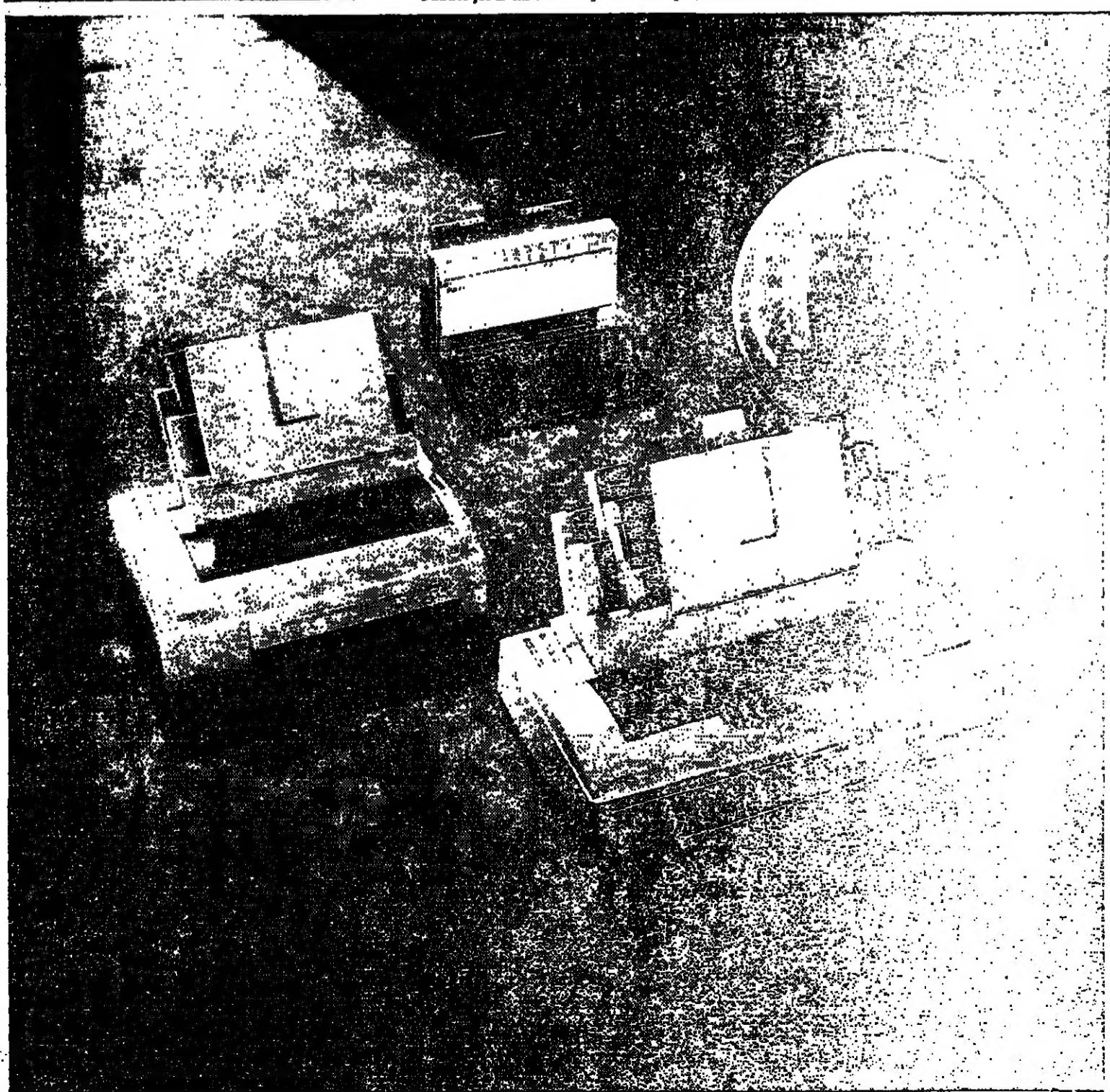
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Britain in recession: as debts soar and jobs go, families face a harsh new world

Lenders repossess record 43,890 homes in past year

By CHRISTOPHER WARMAN, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

A RECORD 43,890 homes were repossessed last year and thousands more people fell into serious arrears.

High interest rates and the property slump hit homebuyers harder than at any time in the last two decades, the Council of Mortgage Lenders disclosed in statistics published yesterday. They showed that 27,330 dwellings were repossessed by mortgage lenders in the second half of 1990, against 16,560 in the first half.

The yearly total of 43,890 was the highest since figures were first gathered in 1979, representing 0.47 per cent of all outstanding loans. The total for 1989 was 15,810, or 0.17 per cent.

Mark Boleat, director general of the council, said yesterday that he expected repossession figures to increase in the first six months of this year, but he suggested that the figures for arrears had probably reached a plateau.

Mr Boleat admitted that in retrospect a few lenders would

say that they might not have adopted strict enough criteria in making loans at the peak of the property boom in 1987 and 1988, but that borrowers did not take enough care.

The council said the number of loans 6-12 months in arrears increased to 123,110 (1.31 per cent) at the end of December 1989, compared with 87,790 at the end of June. The number of arrears of over 12 months rose from 21,580 to 36,100 (0.38 per cent) during the same period.

Mr Boleat said the worst effects were felt in London, the South-East and East Anglia, where the housing market had suffered most severely in the slump. The high level of interest rates, which had remained at 14.5 per cent or more since November 1989, had taken its toll.

A second factor was that the decline in turnover in the housing market meant that borrowers in difficulties were unable to sell their homes to buy a cheaper one. That was exacerbated by the third fac-

tor, the decline in house prices in some regions, the council said. That decline "may be an important factor in the increase in the proportion of possessions that do not involve court proceedings."

"If people believe that house prices are falling and will continue to fall they are more likely to hand in the keys to the lender." The proportion of possessions not involving court proceedings is normally about one third, but in 1990 rose to one half.

The council also blamed the increase in repossessions on the rise in unemployment, the diminishing importance of mortgage interest tax relief, and changes in the social security system. Until 1986, income support was available to cover all the mortgage interest of qualifying families. Since then, income support has covered only half the interest due for the first 16 weeks, with full support available thereafter.

Mr Boleat said building societies, banks and centralised lenders would continue to help people with genuine difficulties in meeting repayments and would do all they could to avoid repossessing homes.

Eviction threat as dream is ended

By PAUL WILKINSON

ELLEN Skyrme was a classic example of Thatcherite Britain. From a working-class background and brought up in a council house, she was determined to become a home-owning entrepreneur.

By the time she was 25 she was running a south coast building business with 46 staff and looking forward to living in a home valued at a third of a million pounds. Today her business employs just Mrs Skyrme and her husband Ian and is near bankruptcy. The taxman says she and her firm owe £30,000 and she faces losing her house.

Rising interest rates and falling house prices mean that the home they bought for £71,000 three years ago to convert and sell at a profit has left them with an unrepayable mortgage of £225,000. Last week the Mortgage Corporation gave them a month to find a solution or face repossession.

Mrs Skyrme, now 27, said: "We don't know whether to fight them or just hand over the keys. There is no way we can find the money unless a windfall comes our way." Trouble began soon after she took a £63,000 mortgage from Lloyds Bank for a cottage at

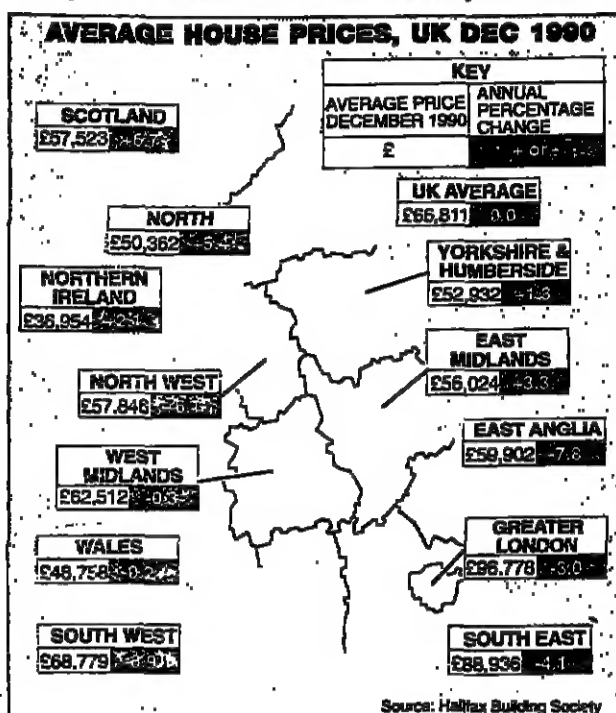


Backs to the wall: Mr and Mrs Skyrme outside the house at Middleton-on-Sea, which is facing repossession

Middleton-on-Sea, West Sussex. She and her husband began converting it into a four-bedroomed home.

In early 1988, estate agents valued the final product at £335,000 so the bank was happy to agree an unsecured overdraft for improvements. It is now for sale at £250,000, a price set by the depressed market. The overdraft rose to

£80,000 and interest brought monthly repayments to £4,000. By this time, small building businesses were doing badly and they could only offer the bank £1,000 monthly. By May 1990, missed repayments brought their overdraft to £125,000 and a new mortgage was the only way to reduce outgoings. The Mortgage Corporation then consolidated all their debts into one loan and topped it up to provide working capital. Their total borrowing rose to £225,000. Because they could now pay back at lower mortgage interest rates rather than overdraft rates, monthly repayments dropped to £2,600, but income fell. Mrs Skyrme has not taken a wage since last April and her husband is seeking any work. Last November they were warned of repossession proceedings but until last week the threat of eviction had been staved off. Mrs Skyrme, who explained her plight on a recent *Kilroy* television programme, blamed the government for encouraging people to become home-owners, then lifting interest rates. The government would have to pay "when we have to live off the state".



From a City bank to driving a minicab

By BILL FROST

ANTHONY Barrell hates Sunday nights. He sits at home dreading the prospect of work the next morning. There was a time, however, when he looked forward to the week to come. That was 18 months ago, before he lost his £35,000 a year job as operations manager with a City bank. He now drives a minicab in east London.

Mr Barrell, aged 43, well remembers the morning he was dismissed. "I was discussing salary increases for my 40 staff with management. Then they passed me a draft letter to read. It told me my contract was terminated. I felt as



Barrell: "They snuffed something out inside me"

though I had done ten rounds with a heavyweight boxer."

With an £80,000 mortgage on his Hampshire home Mr Barrell needed a job quickly. "It is a dreadful feeling when you are told that you are surplus to requirements. But there is no time for wallowing in it. I found a job with a small go-ahead company."

The job did not work out. Mr Barrell was desperate. As his anxiety mounted he scaled down his aspirations. "I saw an ad placed by a minicab firm in London. I just knew there was no alternative," he said.

He is resentful towards his former employers. "They snuffed something out inside me. I had always been loyal and done my best. Those qualities, that spirit I once had, have been damaged badly."

Mr Barrell is still applying for jobs. "Somewhere out there is the right job, and I am going to get it."

For every vacancy a rush of applicants

By TIM JONES

EMPLOYMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE job, for a word processor operator with knowledge of French, had been in the window for only two hours and the staff at the Alfred Marks employment agency in Victoria, central London, thought they were under siege. In that time, more than 30 people applied for the £15,000-a-year job.

They included teachers, an accountant, highly qualified secretaries who had been made redundant, and people with hardly any knowledge of French. Many were willing to take a considerable drop in salary to secure the job.

It was a clear indication of the worsening unemployment affecting London, where, according to Tony Blair, Labour's employment spokesman, 30 claimants are now chasing every vacancy.

In Norwich, where Mr Blair said 26 people were chasing every Jobcentre vacancy, Alfred Marks had to remove a card for three part-time building labourers because so many people, some with degrees, had applied. Another advertisement in Norwich for a part-time receptionist elicited more than 60 applicants on the first day.

As the political battle sharpens, Michael Howard, the employment secretary, has been fighting a rearguard action against the figures put out by Mr Blair and this week's analysis by *The Times*, which showed that unemployment in the year to December increased by 32.4 per cent in Conservative seats.

Mr Howard suggested, for example, the analysis failed to emphasize that in some areas, such as Berkshire, where *The Times* said unemployment had increased by 61.5 per cent, the base had been very low. "The reality is that the unemployment rate in Berkshire is even now only 3 per cent," he said. "In the Crawley travel-to-work area, the rate has increased by 82.7 per cent; in fact, it now stands at 2 per cent."

Ivor Crewe, page 14

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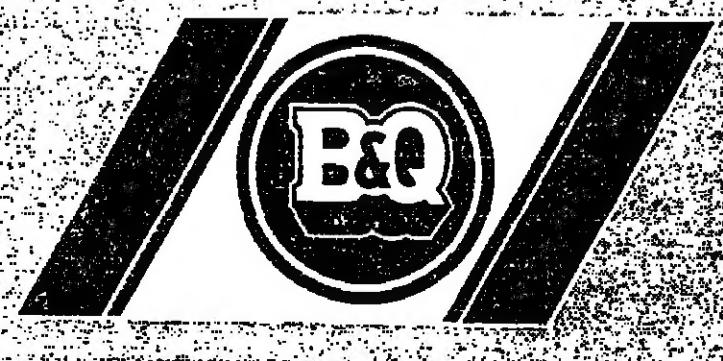
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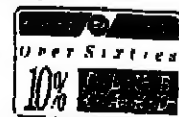
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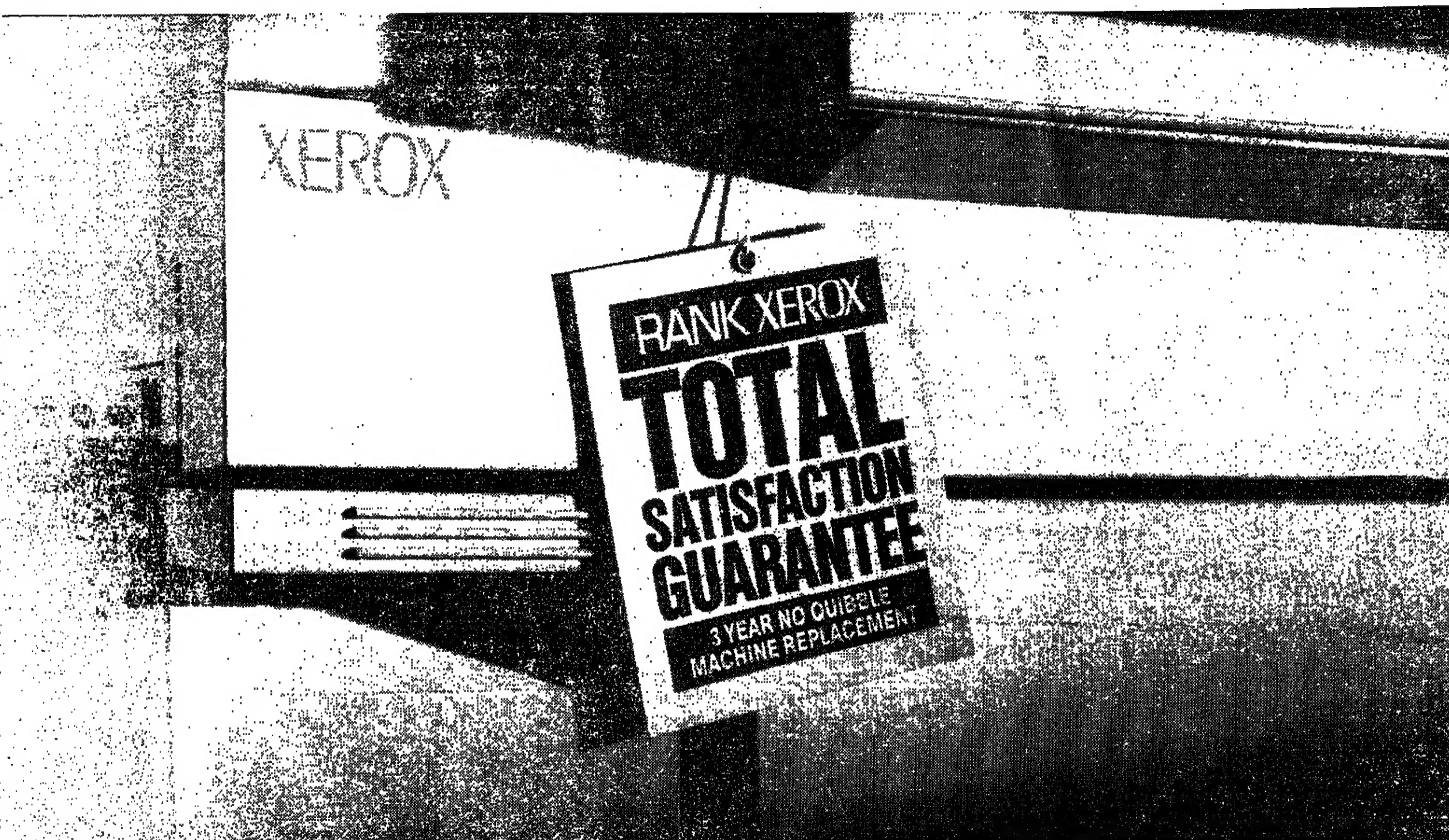
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Police chiefs criticised on crime squad security lapse

By CRAIG SETON

GEOFFREY Dear, former chief constable of the West Midlands, failed to give clear instructions for the headquarters of his serious crime squad to be locked when he disbanded the unit, a report has concluded. It said that senior officers of the force had shown a "lack of professional grip" in not securing evidence kept in the offices.

The police authority

ordered the enquiry to find out whether senior officers had neglected their duty after a disagreement with Mr Dear over responsibility for shutting the offices. Mr Birch concluded that no senior officer could be held responsible for failing to comply with an order from Mr Dear.

Mr Dear, now the Inspector of Constabulary for the Midlands, said yesterday that he accepted ultimate responsibility for the failure immediately to secure the squad's Birmingham headquarters in August 1989, but he added: "There remain two diametrically opposed views of the way in which an instruction was given and received."

The police authority's personnel committee was told yesterday that Mr Birch's report had found no evidence to support any disciplinary action. The committee decided that Mr Birch's 380-page report should remain secret.

In a statement, the police authority said that Mr Birch had concluded that the balance of available evidence showed that "no clear or specific instruction" was given by any officer to secure evidence at the squad's headquarters. Mr Birch said that since it could not be proved that a specific instruction was given, neither Paul Leopold, the deputy chief constable, nor Clive Roche and Tom Metten, both assistant chief constables, could be held responsible.

The report added, however, that even in the absence of any clear or specific direction by Mr Dear, the fact that no action was taken by any officer to implement security arrangements for two days illustrated "a lack of professional grip, both singularly and collectively". It said that insufficient urgency was accorded to the implementation of security measures.

The personnel committee recommended that the police authority take no disciplinary action. It also decided to ask the home secretary to investigate the involvement in the controversy of the Police Complaints Authority (PCA), which issued a statement last August in which it confirmed that Mr Dear had given an instruction to shut the squad's offices.

Iran says Rushdie must die

Iran yesterday marked the second anniversary of its death sentence against Salman Rushdie by declaring that the author must die. A statement by clerical groups offered no hope that Tehran would lift the sentence pronounced by Ayatollah Khomeini.

The late ayatollah's ruling "is not a usual *farwa* that can be changed by another *farwa*", the Islamic Inter-Denominational Society said in a statement on Tehran radio. "This edict is a particular order and no one can cancel it... even if Salman Rushdie becomes the most pious person of the age, he cannot be pardoned."

Manager bailed

Terry Yorath, aged 40, the Wales football manager, was given unconditional bail when he appeared before Swansea City magistrates on one charge of being over twice the legal limit when stopped in his car in Swansea in December, and another charge of driving while unfit through drink or drugs on the same occasion.

Prison work

Karyn Smith, aged 19, the Briton jailed for 25 years for heroin trafficking in Thailand, has begun a four-month gem-cutting course at Klong Prem Central prison near Bangkok.

Cookson ill

The novelist Catherine Cookson, aged 84, who suffers from a rare blood disorder, was in a comfortable condition after being admitted to the Freeman hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne, yesterday.

Tube fire

Commuters walked along the track after a fire beside the line halted a Bakerloo line train between Waterloo and Embankment yesterday. Some passengers were treated at the scene for smoke inhalation.



Dear: accepted ultimate responsibility for lapse

Theatre's policy under threat

By SIMON TAIT, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

SADLER'S Wells theatre, the birthplace of the Royal Ballet and English National Opera, is facing serious problems because of "a maelstrom of funding difficulties for the arts in London".

Stephen Remington, the theatre's director, said yesterday: "Our artistic policy of providing national and international companies for London audiences is under threat. It is always a struggle to break even, and though we hope to have a small surplus this year, unless we get help for next year, some of the international companies from France and the United States we are hoping to present won't come."

London's leading producing house for contemporary lyric theatre work, Sadler's Wells is £300,000 in deficit. A five-year sponsorship agreement for £100,000 a year from Digital ends in June and a new sponsor is being sought.

The present Sadler's Wells theatre was founded by Lillian Baylis 60 years ago as a counter-balance to the Old Vic, but now faces becoming a receiving house for outside productions such as the *The King and I*, which opened there this week, if there is inadequate assistance for running costs. Redundancies among the 45 full-time and 45 part-time staff would follow, and rents would increase for

such companies as London Contemporary Dance, Opera 30, Birmingham Royal Ballet and D'Oyly Carte Opera, which have seasons there. After nearly two decades of annual visits to the Wells, the Rambert dance company has moved to the Riverside Studios for its London season.

Running costs at Sadler's Wells, which lost the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet to Birmingham last year because its stage and backstage facilities were inadequate, are £1.4 million a year. This year it is planning to raise seat prices, and from April the Lillian Baylis theatre, the 250-seat studio, is to be rented out.

The theatre is not a revenue client of the Arts Council (and therefore not eligible for a grant from the enhancement fund), but last year the theatre was made a special touring grant of £54,000.

The Arts Council's touring panel is to meet on Tuesday to consider a request for £130,000 from Mr Remington. He has also asked to meet Anthony Everitt, the council's secretary-general, "to establish which grant-aid body is the most appropriate to assist with Sadler's Wells' running costs". Since the abolition of the GLC in 1986, subsidy to the theatre has gone down by more than 50 per cent.

New roof for 'time capsule' mansion

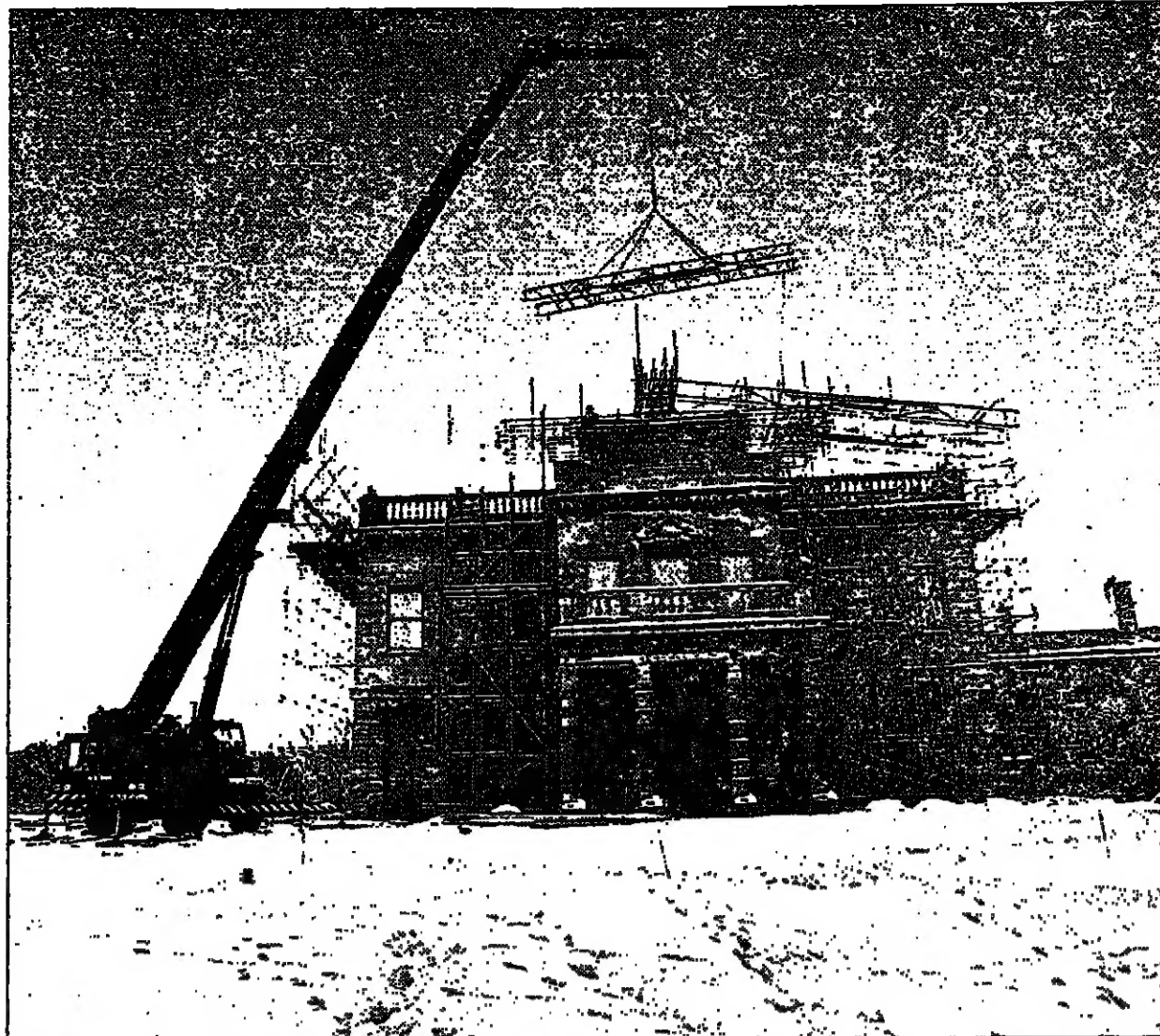
By PETER DAVENPORT

ALMOST a year after English Heritage acquired Brodsworth Hall, the Yorkshire mansion regarded as the best preserved Victorian country house in England, a £3 million conservation programme has reached a critical stage.

The most expensive part of the three-year programme involves stripping off the lead and slate roof and constructing a replacement. Yesterday, a 40-ton crane began lifting huge sections of a temporary roof onto scaffolding supports to protect the interiors while the existing roof is moved.

The house and 17 acres of land were donated to the nation by the former owner, Pamela Williams. The hall, close to the A1 near Doncaster, was built to the design of the Italian architect Cavallotti Casentini for the Thellusson banking family.

What made it remarkable was that it had been permanently lived in since its construction in the 1860s and its interiors, contents and gardens, had remained intact. English Heritage staff have so far catalogued 10,000 artefacts from its unique "time capsule" contents.



Raising the roof: a crane lowers temporary roof sections into place above Brodsworth Hall so replacement of the existing roof can begin. The hall, one of the best preserved of its period, is undergoing extensive restoration

Victory for expelled Nalgo members

By TIM JONES
EMPLOYMENT
CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S biggest white-collar trade union was ordered yesterday to pay a total of £22,680 compensation to nine former members expelled for crossing picket lines during a strike in 1989.

In the first case of its kind under the 1988 Employment Act, which introduced a right not to be unjustifiably disciplined by a trade union, the Employment Appeal Tribunal awarded the nine £2,520 each to compensate for injury to feelings caused by expulsion from the 750,000-strong National and Local Government Officers' Association. Mr Justice Wood, the tribunal president, said that the nine were "witnesses of conscience, courage and integrity".

After the judgment, Alan Jinks, the union's general secretary, condemned the award as "dirty money". The union maintained that the nine, all members of the South Tyneside branch, should have accepted the majority decision to strike over pay and conditions.

TGWU contender, page 18

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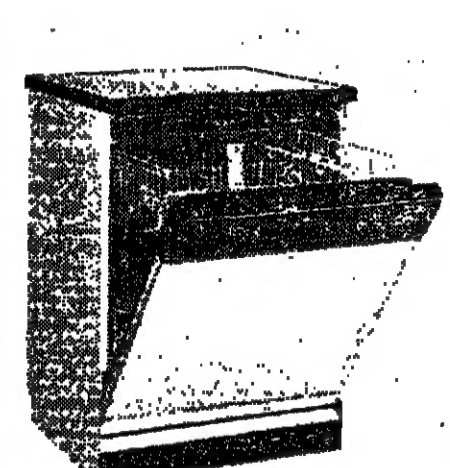
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Concern in Lords on work hours

By SHEILA GUNN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE law should be changed to prohibit staff from working excessive hours when health and safety is put at risk, a group of peers says today.

The Lords EC committee suggests three-stage legislation covering jobs where tiredness puts the public at risk, such as pilots, doctors, security staff, and bus and train drivers, with set limits to protect workers' health and to improve working conditions.

The cross-party committee also calls for Community-wide research on the effects of long working hours, shift and night work on productivity and accident rates. If the study proved that lack of rest threatened workers' health and safety, then Britain should lead an EC drive to reduce the risks.

The report into working time, to be debated in the Lords, says: "We acknowledge that there has been widespread public concern about excessive working hours in certain sectors in the United Kingdom. The hours which are regularly worked by junior hospital doctors have deservedly attracted attention. The enquiry into the Clapham rail disaster highlighted the long shifts worked by some employees in the transport sector."

The peers received evidence that at least a million people in Britain do regular night work and three million work shifts. An estimated 340,000 British employees worked 60 hours a week or more and 29,000 had a working week of at least 80 hours.

House of Lords select committee on European Communities: *Working Time* (Stationery Office: £13.50).

Brooke plans new talks to save Ulster initiative

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PETER BROOKE is to embark on a further round of talks aimed at saving his initiative to break the political deadlock in Northern Ireland from failure.

The Northern Ireland secretary agreed yesterday that the lengthy "talks about talks" process was reaching its concluding stages and he hinted at the difficulties he faces in trying to bridge the gap that still exists between the various parties.

The main Northern Ireland constitutional parties also displayed clear signs that they are preparing their positions in the event of Mr Brooke's initiative being unsuccessful. Mr Brooke is studying an Irish government paper which includes various proposals aimed at overcoming the remaining obstacles to finding a formula that would allow negotiations on an internal administration in the province to start.

The Irish government has accepted that Mr Brooke should act as an arbiter on the timing of Dublin's involvement in a three-tiered set of talks but is pressing for a firm timetable for the start of the second set of negotiations that would be on links between Dublin and Belfast.

His initiative envisages talks between parties in the North on a devolved government for the province and discussions on a North-South relationship and on links between London and Dublin. However, he has been unable to get the agreement of all

parties on the timing of the second stage of the process and on the structure of the negotiations.

The republic has tabled a proposal designed to overcome Unionist insistence that they should attend talks with the Dublin government as part of a UK delegation. The formula proposed by Dublin is one that does not feature the words United Kingdom but is designed to meet the Unionist concerns.

A lesser problem that has yet to be resolved is the venue of the talks on links between Belfast and Dublin, although it is understood that Unionists are no longer insisting that they should take place in London.

Mr Brooke told MPs that the proposals from Dublin indicated the continued good will of the Irish Republic. "I believe that they have merit and they will keep us in play, but I do not know whether they offer us the opportunity to reach our goal."

He promised MPs during Northern Ireland questions that he was determined to pursue the present discussions until it was clear that the position of the various parties was incompatible. Admitting that the present part of his effort to break the deadlock was nearing conclusion, Mr Brooke indicated that final success would require considerable effort by all involved. It would need "considerable political will to make sure that we bring it to a satisfactory conclusion", he said.



Brooke: unable to win parties' agreement yet

Gummer accuses Howells of supporting EC 'foes'

By PETER MULLIGAN AND JOHN WINDER

THE Liberal Democrats were accused yesterday of giving ammunition to Britain's "foes" in the European Community who support controversial proposals for the reform of the common agricultural policy.

John Gummer, minister of agriculture, made clear his strong distaste for the proposed reforms put forward by Ray MacSharry, the EC agriculture commissioner. "We hate them", he said.

During a debate initiated by

the Liberal Democrats, he chided the minority party for calling for aid to be targeted on small and family farms rather than on farms in general.

He said of their agriculture spokesman: "If he goes on trying to suggest that there is this distinction, his words are used by our foes in the EC when we are doing these negotiations."

Mr Gummer said that, by European standards, there were no small farms in Brit-

Democrats go for education tax increases

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Liberal Democrats are to try to become known as the party that is prepared to take tough decisions in the interests of the future in a preliminary general election manifesto to be published next month.

A 5,000-word document, *Shaping Tomorrow, Starting Today*, will be unveiled by Paddy Ashdown in an exercise that will see the party moving away from its traditional association with the centre ground of politics and staking out clear policy stances. The aim, according to senior strategists yesterday, is to leave no doubt in the electorate's mind as to what the party stands for. One said: "They may not like what they see, but at least they will know."

A readiness to increase income tax to boost spending on education if necessary is expected to be one of the policy commitments designed to prove that the Liberal Democrats will not duck questions

that the other main parties prefer to ignore.

Lord Holme of Cheltenham, personal adviser to Mr Ashdown and the man in charge of the manifesto-making process, makes plain today that the document will attempt to sharpen the party's policy appeals, but will not be a policy compendium covering every policy nostrum favoured by its members.

In an article in *Liberal Democrat News*, Lord Holme says: "The document is uncompromising in saying that painful decisions need to be taken now if we are to secure a better future for our children and grandchildren, and in this sense it will confirm the honest, realistic and tough-minded approach to politics that has increased public respect for our leader so much over the past year."

Party officials declined yesterday to give details of the document's contents, but the policy proposals are expected to concentrate on what the party calls the "five Es": enterprising economy, educational investment, environmental renewal, European partnership and electoral and constitutional reform.

To achieve those goals, the document calls for European union and reform of the electoral system and the construction.

Lord Holme says that the whole thrust of the document is unambiguously towards the future and the year 2000. He says: "Voters are well aware that our problems are serious and long term and that the days of short-term gimmicks and quick fixes are over."

The document sets out priorities that the party leadership believes can be afforded in the short term to set the country on the right path.

Lord Holme accepts that a common complaint about the Liberal Democrats is that people do not know what they stand for. It is galling, he says, but consoling that the criticism derives from its greatest asset, that it is not a class party standing for one general producer-social-interest against the other.

The manifesto will be debated at the party's spring conference in Nottingham on March 15-17.



More aid for the homeless

The government is to provide £4.5 million in the coming financial year to voluntary organisations helping the homeless. Making the announcement in a Commons written reply, Tim Yeo, an environment minister, said that that was £2 million more than provided this year and it would be divided among 78 organisations, most outside London.

Tour trade

Tony Lloyd, the shadow tourism minister, has called on the government to set up a joint working party with the tourist trade and the unions to consider how to avert the crisis facing the industry.

Parliament next week

The main business in the Commons next week is expected to be: Monday Maintenance Enforcement bill, second reading.

Tuesday Debates on Opposition motions on the poll tax and on manufacturing industry. Wednesday Criminal Justice bill, report, first day. Thursday Debate on the Gulf war. Friday Private members' bills.

The main business in the House of Lords is expected to be: Monday Debate on horse racing. Tuesday Planning and Compensation bill, report, first day. Wednesday Debates on no-fault compensation for medical injuries and on the performing arts. Thursday Planning and Compensation bill, report, second day.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Private member's bill: Badgers bill, second reading.

Private rent plan approved

By NICHOLAS WOOD
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PLANS to revive the private rent sector by encouraging housing associations to act as landlords were supported by the prime minister yesterday.

John Major told MPs that it was absurd that the market was declining because of rent control and that thousands of properties were standing empty.

Local authorities had been given incentives to let vacant council houses and the government was working on measures to resurrect the private landlord.

"We are continuing to examine further ways of stimulating the private sector," Mr Major said. It was disclosed by Whitehall sources later that the prime

minister was referring to moves by Sir George Young, the housing minister, to bring 600,000 empty properties



Sir George: "Plenty of room for new players"

back into use by encouraging housing associations to manage lettings for private owners.

Last month, Sir George said: "With the involvement of housing associations we will be able to bridge the gulf of mistrust between private landlords and tenants, which is now possibly the main obstacle to the revival of private renting."

The minister added that people needed to be persuaded that they could let their property safely and that for them a tenancy managed by a housing association was the best solution. He said: "The time has come for housing associations to consider adding to their portfolio of skills in housing provision by entering the field of residential property management. There is plenty of room for new players."

Public spending reports

Stricter legal aid controls

By FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

STRICTER controls on legal aid spending measures are being proposed between the Lord Chancellor's officials and the Legal Aid Board in an effort to reduce the rising legal aid bill,

predicted to reach about £800 million gross this year.

Details published yesterday in the government's spending plans confirm that spending for 1990-1 by the Lord Chancellor's department will outstrip original estimates by about £97 million, 72 per cent of which goes on legal aid.

The net costs of the department for 1990-1 are estimated at £102 million and the predictions are that that total will rise to a net £142 million in 1991-2, to £186 million in 1992-3 and finally to more than double the present level at £211 million in 1993-4.

By contrast, the net costs of the Crown Prosecution Service are predicted to be fairly stable. They are estimated at £128 million for 1990-1, expected to rise to £150 million for 1991-2 and after that to stay fairly constant, at £155 million for 1992-3 and £158 million for 1993-4.

The report outlines the action being taken to curb costs. "Greater emphasis will be placed in discussion with the professional bodies upon the need for legal aid to secure value for money", it says.

Officials want to bring a system of standard or fixed fees into the magistrates' courts. That would mean a set fee according to the case.

In the crown court, officials are considering setting up local teams to deal with taxation (the formal scrutiny of a lawyer's legal aid bill), and target high-cost work.

Government Scottish work gets 11% extra

By KERRY GILL

SPENDING on government programmes in Scotland during the next financial year will amount to £11 billion, an increase of 11 per cent over this year, according to Ian Lang, the Scottish secretary, who published his report, *Serving Scotland's Needs*, yesterday.

In 1991-2 the overall rise in spending on the health service since 1979-80 will be almost 40 per cent in real terms.

"After allowing for the recent announcement of supplementary funding for doctors' and nurses' pay, gross expenditure on the health service in 1991-2 is planned to be £309 million greater than in 1990-1, and to rise by a further £270 million over the following two

years", Mr Lang said. The extra money will fund initiatives including a national heart and lung transplant facility, a national service for the rehabilitation of brain injury patients and the creation of the new health education board in Scotland.

On April 1, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise will be launched with a network of firms aimed at enhancing the role of private enterprise and encouraging the introduction of modern technology.

The government's education provision in the next financial year will be £540 million, about a fifth more than in 1990-1. Most of the extra money will go towards running the grant-aided colleges and to student support.

The Government's Expenditure Plans 1991-2 to 1993-4 (Command 1510, Stationery Office: £5.70).

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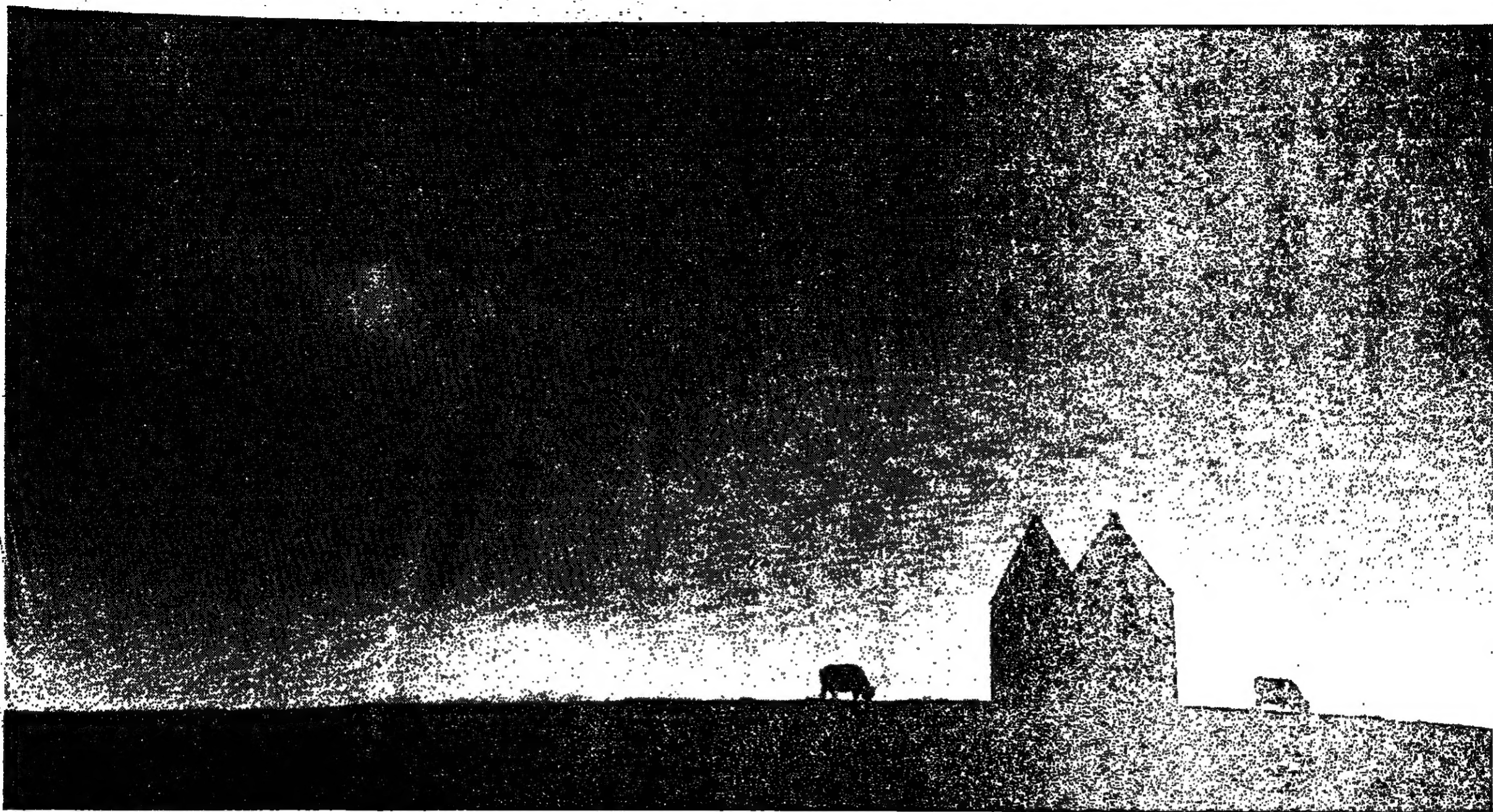
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UNITED NATIONS

Pérez de Cuéllar rules out ceasefire before withdrawal

From JAMES BONE
in NEW YORK
AND MARY DEJEVSKY
in MOSCOW

AS THE United Nations Security Council began its private meeting on the Gulf War, the UN secretary-general said he saw no prospect of a ceasefire unless Iraq promises to withdraw from Kuwait.

Cuba and Yemen, which sought the formal debate, have hinted that they want a resolution calling for a pause in hostilities, but have launched no formal initiative. Britain and America would veto such a proposal.

Thomas Pickering, the American ambassador, told the council on Wednesday: "We have no intention of offering Saddam Hussein breathing space in which to regroup. Nor does he have any need of a pause in the fighting to make the decision which he needs to make." Two of the other three veto powers, France and the Soviet Union, have said they see no need for a halt in hostilities until Iraq promises to withdraw.

Asked about a possible ceasefire, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the secretary-general, said: "I don't think that a ceasefire at this stage without a firm commitment to withdrawal would be acceptable to the countries working together with Kuwait in order to implement the council resolutions."

One Western diplomat sug-



Pickering: no breathing space for Saddam

gested that when Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, visits Moscow on Sunday, the Soviet Union might obtain a more vague commitment from Iraq on withdrawal than might satisfy the Americans. That would leave the security council in a quandary about whether to call a halt to hostilities on the basis of an Iraqi commitment to pull out of Kuwait. The Soviet Union is expected to inform the council about the outcome of the Mr Aziz's trip.

The unusual closed formal meeting of the security council began yesterday with members discussing whether speakers should be questioned or simply deliver prepared statements. In London, diplomats more usually advocating the

open conduct of public affairs were much relieved that the 9-2 vote in favour of a closed meeting had saved the alliance from the embarrassment of public castigation. Unease remained on the possible voting pattern of any more substantive resolution.

Since the landmark series of resolutions culminating in Resolution 678 authorising member states to use military means to force Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait, five seats on the security council have rotated. Canada, Colombia, Finland, Malaysia and Ethiopia — all of which voted in favour of the resolutions calling for Iraq's withdrawal — have been replaced by Austria, Belgium, Ecuador, India and Zimbabwe.

The allies have been encouraged by Moscow's noticeably restrained response to Wednesday's bombing of a Baghdad air raid shelter. The Kremlin yesterday embarked on another round of intensive diplomatic activity to advance an end to the war.

Sheikh Sabah al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti foreign minister, ended a daylong visit to Moscow, stating his satisfaction with the Soviet position, and it was announced that Ali Akbar Velayati, the Iranian foreign minister, would visit the Soviet capital today for a short working visit.

Yevgeni Primakov, the president's special envoy, returned from Baghdad, via

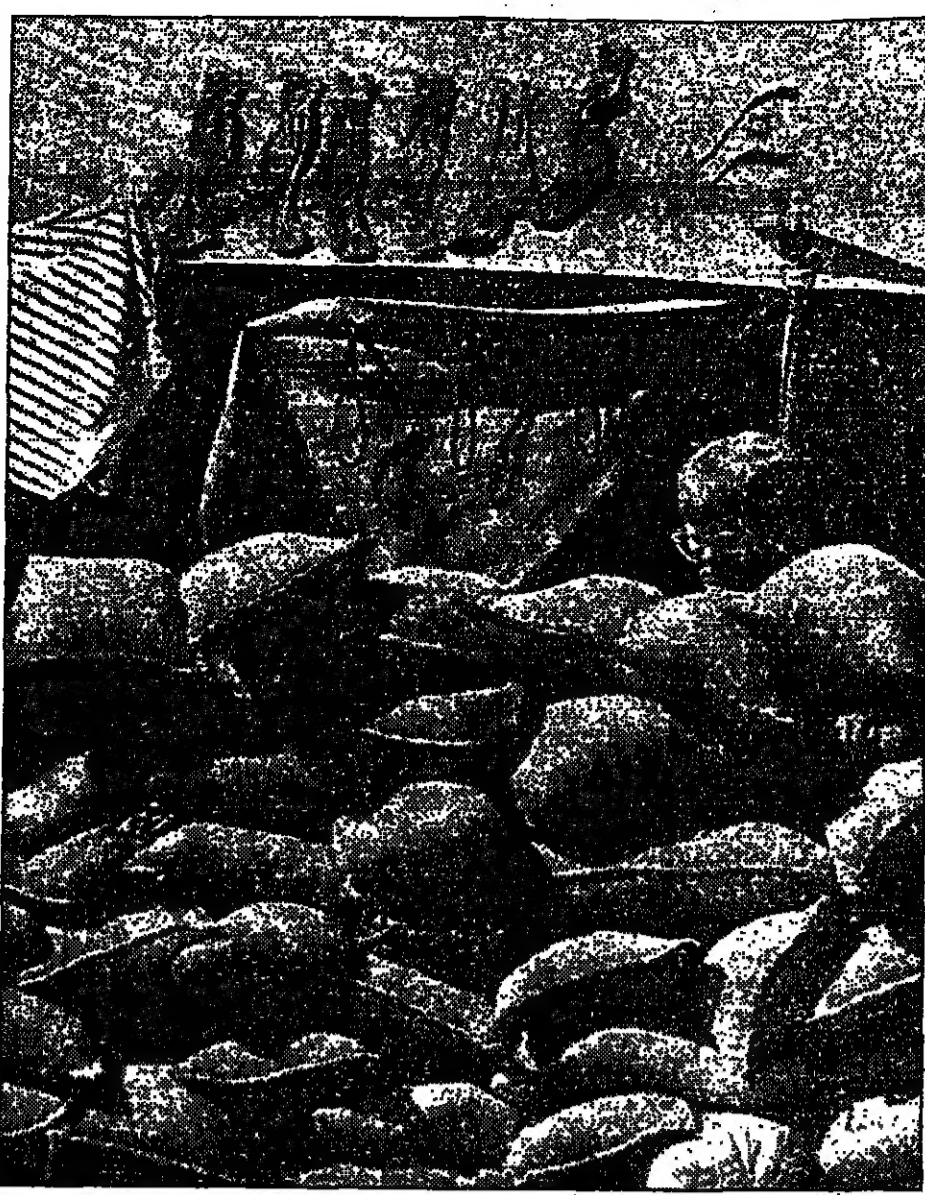
Tehran, late on Wednesday, reporting "some rays of light" in the position of the Iraqi leadership. The Kuwaiti foreign minister yesterday told reporters that he had been given to understand that Baghdad had shown a "degree of flexibility", though he did not give details.

Sheikh Sabah said he had received a detailed report on Mr Primakov's visit. He emphasised, however, that Kuwait had no intention of making any concessions, territorial or otherwise. "We will not give up one fraction of our land," he said, and stipulated that no ceasefire should take effect until Iraq had begun to withdraw from Kuwait. Soviet officials have suggested that a statement of intent on Baghdad's part might be sufficient to bring about a ceasefire.

Responding to the allied strike on the Baghdad air raid shelter on Wednesday, Sheikh Sabah said: "Kuwait has been occupied since August 2, its people killed and tortured. You must remember that."

Later Vitali Churkin, the Soviet foreign ministry spokesman, read a statement, saying the bombing only served to justify Soviet concern and illustrated "the need for urgent diplomatic and political efforts to halt the bloodshed and restore peace on the basis of the UN security council resolutions".

Leading article, page 15



Laundry day: an American woman soldier uses the sandbags of a joint Israeli-American Patriot anti-missile base in Israel as a screen while doing washing. Her army-issue socks and towel are drying in the early spring sun on her tent roof. Israel's prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, said in an interview, published in Paris yesterday, that his country should take charge of

defending itself against attacks by Iraqi Scud missiles, but it would act only in co-ordination with the United States (AP reports). "Israel does not want to be defended by others," Mr Shamir told the weekly news magazine *L'Espresso*. "It is a painful situation. It has to change. We have to do our share. Because it is up to us to defend our country."

Israelis will keep Golan Heights

Jerusalem — Yitzhak Shamir, the Israeli prime minister, responding to speculation about peace talks with Syria, vowed yesterday never to relinquish the Golan Heights, which Israel captured from Syria in the 1967 six day war (Richard Owen writes).

Mr Shamir dampened hopes that America might engineer a peace treaty between Israel and Syria after the Gulf war when he declared that Israeli policy had not changed and that Israel could not agree to the demilitarisation of the Golan Heights.

Diplomats said Israeli-Syrian negotiations could still be one of the first fruits of the war, and that Israel and Syria were staking out negotiating positions. The Golan Heights dominate the Galilee area and are considered of vital strategic importance by Israel. In 1982 the area was "brought under Israeli law", regarded as equivalent to annexation.

In the wake of the visit to Damascus by Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the German foreign minister, Mr Shamir sent a message to the Committee for Golan Heights Settlements yesterday assuring it that Israel had not agreed, and would not agree, to demilitarisation as part of a peace framework.

Sailor killed

Dubai — An Italian sailor was stabbed to death on a Dubai street on Wednesday, raising fears of terrorism in the Gulf port. Within hours, the Italian ambassador announced that he did not believe the killing was directly linked to Italy's role in the multinational force. Police believe it could be case of street theft.

German pledge

Amman — Germany has tried to reassure Jordan that it will have a pivotal role in postwar Middle East security arrangements. After visiting Egypt, Syria and Jordan, German foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, said: "Jordan will have an important role in the post-Gulf arena for stability in the region."

Terrorist note

Bonn — Red Army Faction terrorists who attacked the American embassy with automatic weapons left a note accusing the US-led military coalition in the Gulf of waging a "war of annihilation against the Iraqi people". The US ambassador to Germany, Vernon Walters, said the attack would not intimidate staff.

UN aid for Iraq

Geneva — A United Nations convoy with £300,000 worth of medical supplies is to drive to Baghdad from Iran tomorrow. The World Health Organisation said arrangements were being made "to ensure to the fullest extent possible" the safety of the seven men in the convoy, who are expected to stay in Iraq for a week.

Cairo meeting

Cairo — Foreign ministers from Syria, Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates gathered here for talks today on a postwar security apparatus for the Middle East. They are all strong supporters of international efforts to drive Iraq's forces from Kuwait. (AFP)

Peace Valentine

Tokyo — Japanese peace campaigners from a group called Peace Box, some dressed as Cupid and some as angels, delivered Valentine's day love letters and huge chocolate hearts to the American and Iraqi embassies yesterday inscribed with the words: "If you stop the war, I'll love you." (Reuters)

BRITAIN

Labour divisions over war deepen

By PHILIP WEBSTER
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR party strains over the Gulf war intensified yesterday as front-benchers called publicly for bombing raids deep into Iraq to be reconsidered and for the leadership to review its stance.

The continued front-bench status of two spokesmen was in doubt last night as latent tensions were brought to the surface by the deaths of civilians in the American bombing on Wednesday.

Claims by Joan Ruddock, a junior transport spokesman, and Clare Short, a social security spokesman, that the raids went beyond United Nations policy and widened the war aims were flatly contradicted by Labour leadership sources.

Mrs Ruddock, former chairman of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, was seen last night, while there were no suggestions that the spokesmen would be dismissed, their decision to speak out on a subject outside their brief caused intense irritation among colleagues trying hard to hold the party together on the war. There was speculation that they might resign to give themselves freedom to speak out.

Concern about the bombing raids was voiced by a member of the shadow cabinet, Robin Cook, shadow health secretary. His remarks on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme reflected the private concern of several colleagues, although he emphasised his support for the leadership line. He said there should be a serious review of the way in which the bombing was hitting targets "which are at best ambiguous as to whether they are military or civilian".

ALLIED FORCES

SORTIES: The allies have flown 70,000 air missions.

CLAIMS: The US said the allies had destroyed 1,300 Iraqi tanks, 800 armoured vehicles and 1,100 artillery pieces. Five Iraqi soldiers surrendered to Saudi forces in the northern border area. John Major said of Wednesday's bombing of the air raid shelter in Baghdad: "The United States have described why they attacked this particular site and they did so on the basis of an assessment that it was a legitimate military target."

LOSSES: An American EF111 Raven electronic jamming and radar-detection plane was shot down, with the death of its pilot and navigator, and a British Tornador was lost. At least 35 of their troops killed in action, including 14 Americans and 18 Saudis. Twenty-two Americans listed as non-combat deaths; 46 allied servicemen missing in action, including 28 Americans, eight British, one Italian, nine Saudis; 12 POWs, two British.

IRAQI FORCES

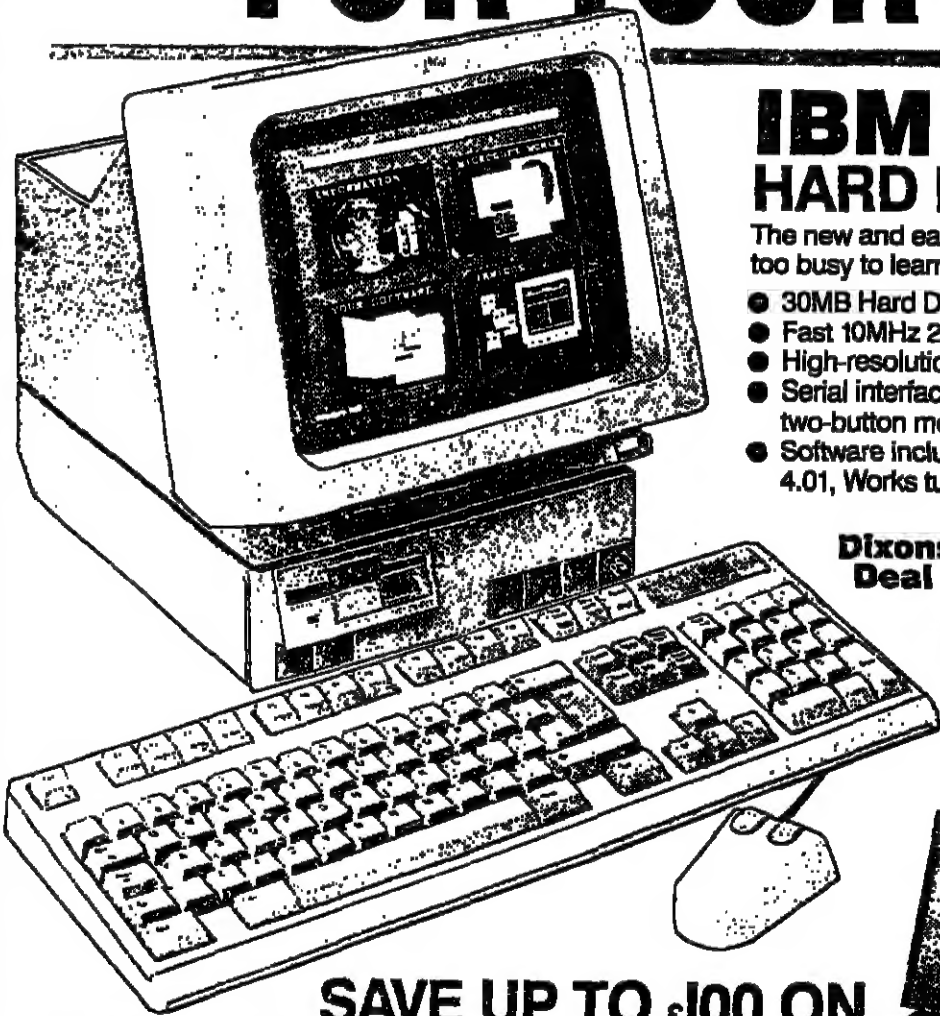
CLAIMS: Iraq said that at least 94 people were killed and many injured in the bombing of the air raid shelter. The allied air attacks have killed 7,000 civilians and injured thousands. Baghdad's ambassador to Tokyo said Baghdad radio warned the allies of "devastating surprises".

SCUD ATTACKS: Iraq fired two missiles at the north-eastern Saudi town of Haifa al-Baten. Four people were slightly injured.

ALLIED WAR AIMS

UN Security Council resolution 678 authorises Kuwait's allies to "use all necessary means" to uphold previous resolutions calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and its government's restoration. It also calls on the nations to restore international peace and security in the area.

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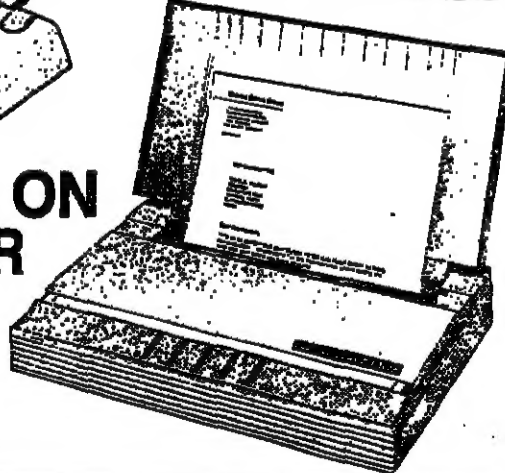
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Misgivings mount among Saudis as air war takes ugly turn

GROWING unease about the American conduct of the Gulf war inside Saudi Arabia has been raised to unprecedented levels by the bombing of the Baghdad bunker and Washington's subsequent handling of the disaster.

In a series of interviews with Saudi intellectuals, only a social worker with personal knowledge of Iraqi atrocities inside Kuwait supported the continuation of the war — each day of which many Saudis now see as a victory of sorts for President Saddam Hussein because of the length of time Iraq has withstood the allied onslaught.

The disquiet inside the desert kingdom follows earlier discontent among prominent Saudi clerics and educators in the form of illegal cassettes, one of which said: "The crusader bandits have come to steal our oil."

"We have had Saudis on the telephone all morning complaining and expressing their deep

unhappiness at the tragedy in Baghdad," said the editor of a leading Saudi newspaper. "One educated woman was in tears as she asked why we were killing civilians. She said she had backed the war when it was geared to liberate Kuwait, but was now against it as it seemed bent on destroying another Arab country."

The editor claimed that resentment in the Arab world at the bunker attack would be reflected in terrorist attacks against allied targets, possibly including those in Saudi Arabia. "The liberals in Saudi Arabia are angry and the religious conservatives are even more angry because they see the incident as the slaughter of fellow Muslims by people they would regard as infidels," he said.

"What has upset people is the way in which the war seems to have changed into a struggle to destroy Iraq," he said. "People were fooled by all those gung-ho

The bombing of Baghdad civilians and Washington's reaction has added to Saudis' disquiet about American war conduct, Christopher Walker reports

generals saying that it would all be over in 72 hours and now they want to stop it. They think that Bush only seems to care about American lives and does not worry about Iraqi casualties."

A Saudi female radio announcer and mother of five was more outspoken in a telephone interview from Jeddah where many Saudi families from Riyadh and the Eastern province have fled because it is out of range of Iraqi Scuds.

"Everyone is now talking about the war and the appalling thing which happened in Baghdad. For the Americans, it does not seem to be a problem if anyone else dies, especially

Arabs," she said. "They treat us like insects. With Western lives it is different: if one Western is just taken hostage, not even killed, the whole world is turmoil."

"I feel that we in Saudi Arabia are standing by helplessly and letting things happen that should not happen. This war should stop now. It has become very, very ugly. I do not know a single person in Jeddah, or elsewhere in the country, who does not think like this, but it is so frustrating — we cannot do anything."

Like many Saudis, the announcer said that at the outset of war four weeks ago she had assumed it would be over quickly and had not opposed it. "Now it

is different. There must be another way to solve the problem of Kuwait," she explained. "Few people are with Saddam, but they are unhappy to see that the US has come down to his level and started to behave as he does."

Many Saudis are sceptical of the American explanations of why the bunker was attacked and about Washington's claims that the attackers had no idea there were civilians inside.

Long used to strict censorship of their own, the Saudis have been made aware in their papers and on television (Cable News Network is broadcast here for the first time, although delayed for censorship) that Western news is also censored.

A professor of English at the Abdul Aziz university in Jeddah said that students and teachers had been expressing disquiet at the conduct of the war before the Baghdad attack. "There were doubts before, but now they are

killing Muslim civilians these are much greater," she said. "The Americans just do not seem to care how many Arabs die."

She pleaded for the war to be halted before it developed into a land battle with big casualties. "At least there must now be an immediate pause to find a diplomatic way out," she demanded. "This cannot go on."

A Saudi journalist on the weekly magazine, *As-Sayid al-Arabi*, who had spent time in the desert with US troops voiced the growing anti-American sentiment familiar in Arab countries such as Jordan and Yemen. More and more Saudis are now turning to Radio Baghdad and the state radio of Yemen for information about the war to counter what they see as the one-sided accounts in their media.

"What people here resent is the impression given on television by Americans like Richard Cheney, the defence secretary, that white

blood is more valuable than black blood," the journalist said. "The war was started to liberate Kuwait and that was okay. Now it is aimed at destroying Iraq and people here just do not approve of that."

Support for the allied stand came from Najila Nasser el-Anbar, a Saudi social worker who has been looking after Kuwaiti exiles since the invasion on August 2. "What is happening in Kuwait to everyone, even to women and children now is terrible. They are being tortured and killed," she said. "It must be stopped. Our government has all my backing for what it is doing. Kuwait must be liberated as soon as possible."

Her remarks reflected the views of the overwhelming majority here before the war was launched. But that view is now being challenged. (This report is subject to allied military reporting restrictions)

AIR STRATEGY

Danger to civilians keeps strategic sites off allied target list

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE coalition leaders lined up against President Saddam in have laid down a set of guiding principles for their campaign. The rules, which fix targets and objectives for part of the operations, are: bombing targets have to be strategic and military; civilian casualties must be kept to a minimum; the war must be seen to be against the Iraqi leadership, not against the Iraqi people; and Kuwait must be liberated only when allied casualties can be kept to an "acceptable" level.

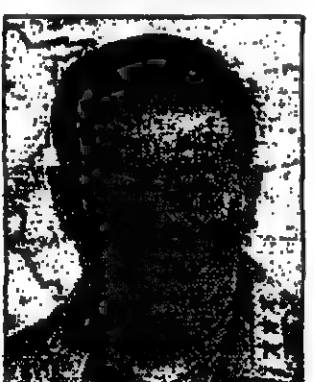
The rules of engagement supplied by the British government to the three armed services in the Gulf are flexible enough not to restrain the military unduly. But every aircrew in an allied bomber is aware that, unless it can hit the designated target, it should turn to base with a full bombload. This has happened regularly, owing to bad weather or to the heavy anti-aircraft fire.

The target list, drawn up by Lieutenant-General Charles "Chuck" Horner, the United States Air Force chief in the Gulf, has some obvious omissions. For example, although "dual purpose" constructions such as bridges, roads and oil refineries are included, dams have been excluded. The Mosul dam, renamed Saddam Hussein dam, has a big reservoir stretching about eight miles. According to British consultants quoted in the magazine *New Civil Engineer* last month, low-lying Baghdad and most of southern Iraq

would be swept away if allied bombers breached the dam.

The town of Mosul has been bombed because there is a large air base there, but the dam has been left untouched. While the world focuses on the death of Iraqi women and children on Wednesday inside the "air raid shelter" in Baghdad, the exclusion of dams from the bombing list underlines the allies' dilemma. Military operations which could shorten the war have been ruled out because of the effect they might have on civilians.

The allies' political and emotional agonising over Wednesday's loss of civilian lives in Baghdad will comfort Saddam. He can be confident that allied aircraft will not



Horner responsible for drawing up target list

bomb targets in Kuwait City, for fear of killing Kuwaiti citizens. The city is "target-rich", but well-defended. Saddam has filled the streets with tanks, armoured personnel carriers and artillery, and there are anti-aircraft guns on every high building. Blocks of

flats have been taken over as command and control headquarters, doubtless with some residents remaining to ward off allied bombers.

Following Wednesday's civilian death toll, there have been appeals to stop the bombing "for humanitarian reasons". This shows, more clearly than ever before, that members of the public, except for those who have relatives serving in the Gulf, see the war from an emotional and geographical distance. The left-wing Labour MPs who tabled a motion on Wednesday condemning "the barbaric slaughter of innocent men, women and children" might not have been so eager to criticise had Britain also been under air bombardment and newspapers filled with pictures of British civilian deaths.

But the allies will have to continue to prove to the Iraqi people and the world that their targeting policy is still based on guiding principles which emphasise the need to limit civilian casualties.

King's response: Britain was "absolutely committed" to minimising civilian casualties and deeply regretted any that occurred in the bombing of Iraq, Tom King, the defence secretary, said yesterday (Michael Binyon writes).

He voiced strong suspicions that Saddam was deliberately concealing bunkers in civilian areas and positioning aircraft in the middle of housing estates. However, he said, there was no change in the allied policy. Saddam was responsible for "every casualty in this war".



AMERICAN REACTION

Public resolves to close ranks behind president

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN NEW YORK

AMERICA'S anti-war minority seized on the Baghdad bunker bombing as proof of the folly of "George Bush's war", as they call it, but the grim video footage appears to have stiffened the resolve of ordinary and opinion-leading Americans to prosecute the campaign.

Peace activists issued calls for a halt to the war yesterday and comparisons with the American overkill of the Vietnam era were rife from churchmen and other war opponents. But spot polls and interviews around the country showed the public to be shocked but rallying strongly behind the president.

"We did not target that bunker knowing civilians were going to be there," said a Texas oil refinery worker, voicing a consensus heard across the country. "These things happen in war." In Atlanta, Pedro Garcia, a psychiatrist, said his patients were solidly behind the war. "People in general are very much convinced of the justice of the war and they have the impression that these people are doing their best to avoid civilian casualties."

There was no doubt the film from Baghdad marked a turning point in public perception of a war that has been viewed as an antiseptic affair full of surgical strikes and bloodless bombing. Americans talked of little else on Wednesday, and television and the press have dwelt on every angle. But while official Washington

switched to the defensive for the first time, interviews showed Americans were angry over the anti-American political backlash abroad and Saddam Hussein's apparent propaganda windfall.

In some New York bars, the kind of places where customers wear T-shirts proclaiming "Nuke Baghdad" and "Baghdad, parking lot of the Middle East", the bombing was greeted with something like dismissive glee.

The consensus was echoed, with one big exception, in newspaper editorials and television commentaries yesterday. *The Washington Post* called on America to avoid "being panicked into demanding further restrictions, Vietnam-style, on the bombing."

The *Wall Street Journal* said "civilians are Saddam's burden" and added: "The Bush administration is not likely to be pushed off course by such a story." The *New York Post* worried that Saddam was beating America in the propaganda war and blamed him for all civilian casualties.

The exception was *The New York Times*, which has consistently opposed the war. "Civilian casualties hurt the allied cause," it said. "It seems reasonable to ask why not stop bombing cities?"

The carnage prompted renewed attacks on the role of Cable News Network, the only US television company with a Baghdad operation, in disseminating the Iraqi point of view.

Cursing America: women demonstrators screaming insults against the United States outside the American embassy in Amman yesterday. Among the hundreds of black-clad women gathered in the Jordanian capital were many Iraqis (Reuters reports). They threw stones, mud and shoes at the building and smashed windows at the nearby Egyptian embassy in protest against the allied bombing of the Baghdad air raid shelter in which many civilians died. Protesters also broke windows at a United Nations building. "Saddam Hussein, use your chemicals," the crowd chanted. About 600 people kept up the protest throughout the day between the American and the Egyptian embassies. Some carried "wanted" posters of President Bush, accusing him of "executing Iraqi children", whose death would bring the reward of an empty barrel of oil. It was the first time that the Jordanian riot police had allowed demonstrators near the diplomatic missions. Protest marches were also reported from other areas of the country.

ARAB REACTION

Region swept by rage and grief

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

SYRIA said President Saddam Hussein was responsible for the deaths of people in a Baghdad air raid shelter hit by American bombs, and Egypt said civilian deaths were in the nature of war, but rage and grief swept the Arab world yesterday, heightening hostility to America.

Syrian leader said: "He who holds the decision to stop the bloodletting with one word, and refrains from saying that word, is responsible for the spilling of every extra drop of Iraqi blood."

But Yasser Arafat, the Palestine Liberation Organisation leader, visited the shelter yesterday and said the attack was an "abominable crime". He said his visit confirmed his belief that allied bombing was directed at "public services, hospitals, schools, factories, mosques, churches and holy sites". Thousands of enraged Palestinians demonstrated in refugee camps in Lebanon.

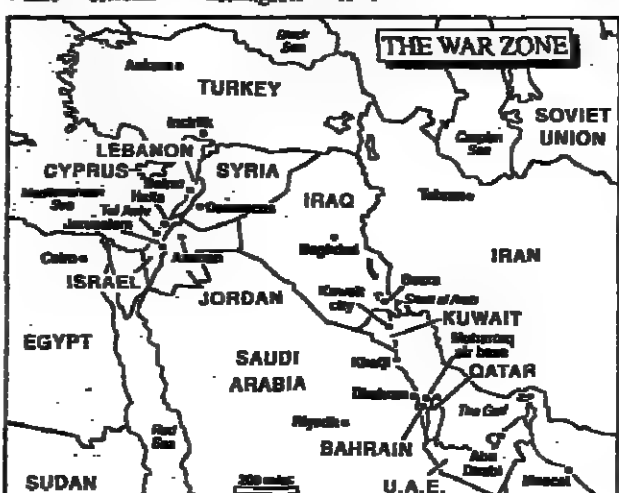
Jordan, Algeria and Tunisia declared official mourning and voiced outrage. Jordanian demonstrators stoned the American and Egyptian embassies and people demonstrated throughout Tunisia.

The Tunisian government called the bombing a "barbaric and flagrant violation of law". Jordan denounced "a horrible massacre" and President Chadli Benjedid of Algeria accused certain Arab states of "lending a hand to an operation of genocide". Moroccan officials called for a truce. Ali Akbar Velayati, the Iranian foreign minister, said the bombing showed the war was getting out of hand.

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Judge orders adjournment of Winnie Mandela trial

FROM GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

THE trial of Winnie Mandela on kidnap and serious assault charges has been adjourned until March 6 in the hope that the South African police can trace an important witness, Gabriel Mekgwe, who was abducted from a church mission in Soweto last weekend.

Two plaintiffs yesterday refused to testify. Mr Justice M. S. Slegmann, presiding, threatened the men with indefinite imprisonment if they did not give evidence. After

ruling that fear for their lives did not constitute "just excuse", he gave them 20 minutes to decide whether to testify, or face successive five-year prison terms. After a brief recess, the lawyer for the two, Kenneth Kgase, aged 31, and Barend Mono, aged 21, said they were still refusing to testify. Jan Swanepoel, for the prosecution, then moved for a postponement in the hope that the police might find Mr Mekgwe, aged 22. He said Mr Kgase and Mr Mono had agreed to give evidence if Mr Mekgwe were found alive.

The three are the survivors of a kidnapping and assault a year ago, allegedly by Mrs Mandela and seven others. The leader of Mrs Mandela's entourage, which posed as a football club, was sentenced to death last August for the murder of a fourth person, Stompie Moeketsi Seipei, aged 14. Four defendants have skipped bail.

Mrs Mandela, who denies the charges, made a clenched fist salute before entering the dock yesterday. Her husband, Nelson Mandela, the deputy president of the African National Congress, was in the public gallery.

● **HARARE:** The ANC office in Zimbabwe said yesterday it was sceptical of reports that Mr Mekgwe was in Harare (Jan Raath writes). Max Mlonyeni, the ANC representative, said he suspected that a call reported by the South African Press Association to come from Mr Mekgwe in Harare was a hoax.

Diary, page 14

Pretoria to speed jail releases

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

THREE South African supreme court judges have been appointed to head special indemnity committees to hasten the release of political prisoners. The announcement by the justice ministry in Cape Town follows talks two days ago between the government and the African National Congress on the deadlock in interpreting agreements, which stalled progress towards constitutional reform.

A statement after the meeting, led by President de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, the deputy president of the ANC, said they had reached a compromise. Although details have not been made public, it appears the justice ministry's announcement is part of it.



Haunting image: ghostly roadside figures which startled drivers near Buffalo, New York State, proved on closer inspection to be a row of shrubs wrapped in sackcloth to protect them from the cold

Window on war in heaven's door

FROM JAMES PRINGLE AT PREAH VIHEAR, CAMBODIA

PEACE seems far away to the handful of soldiers who guard a lonely outpost at this famous but decaying ancient Khmer temple high on a mountain-side in northern Cambodia.

Conflict is no stranger to the ninth-century Preah Vihear, often described as one of the most beautiful temples in Indochina. Nowadays its magnificent location, 2,100ft above Cambodia's green forest, provides an eagle's eye view of the bloody and seemingly endless Cambodian war.

The steep sides of the mountain are laced with landmines and ammunition boxes. A lichen is eating away

many of the stone blocks that make up the temple, unmaintained for 21 years of war. Thieves have made off with fallen statues.

Ownership of the sandstone temple, whose name means holy monastery, has been contested for centuries. Most recently, it was seized by Thailand in 1953 when border police chased away the sole Cambodian occupant, an unarmed watchman.

In 1962, the International Court of Justice endorsed Cambodia's claim to the ruin and the Thais reluctantly pulled out. Built for privacy and meditation in 893 by King

Yasovarman I, it is currently held by forces of the Vietnam-backed Heng Samrin regime in Phnom Penh.

"Peace seems very far away," says Lieutenant Y. Thol, aged 28, who commands the small detachment here, after he welcomes a rare visitor. On a clear day, one can see 65 miles into Cambodia, to Mount Kulen, a Khmer Rouge base not far from the famous Angkor ruins.

As he stands with me gazing at the spectacular view, a Cambodian soldier says: "The war continues because the leaders on both sides want to

be big people." Ancient Cambodian writers described the temple as the door to heaven, and that image comes to mind while climbing the 173 steps that lead to the exquisite but half-ruined outer buildings. The lines of a stone naga, a sacred cobra, follow the contours of the staircase.

A huge red-and-blue flag of the Phnom Penh regime mocks the Khmer Rouge far below. "We are not afraid they can take us by surprise," says Second Lieutenant Phoun Ran, aged 28.

While one can walk on a narrow path towards the staircase from the Thai border just a hundred yards away — the visitor is asked not to stray because of mines — access from the Cambodian plain below is up the almost sheer face of the escarpment.

Troops say it takes ten hours to labour up with food and ammunition from the nearest village. They do, indeed, seem confident the Khmer Rouge could not make the climb undetected, and they walk around without their weapons. "Our forces are guarding the approaches below," says Lieutenant Ran.

There is talk of an international effort to renovate Preah Vihear but experts say work cannot start until mines are cleared and security guaranteed. For that, peace is necessary.

It may not come soon. Even while the four Cambodian factions continue their sporadic peace talks, a Khmer Rouge shelling attack on Battambang, the second city of Cambodia, killed 16 people this week.

Quebec told to beware dream of separatism

FROM JOHN BEST IN OTTAWA

BRIAN Mulroney, the Canadian prime minister, has launched a counter-offensive against separatism in Quebec, warning the people of that predominantly French-speaking province to beware of "dream merchants" in their midst whose aim is to destroy Canada.

In a speech in Quebec city on Wednesday, the prime minister acknowledged that Canada is suffering from a "deep-rooted malaise" stemming from long-simmering constitutional and other problems. The federal government was prepared to discuss a "profound" redistribution of powers with the provinces, "but we will reject any formula that aims to dismantle Canada".

He listed a series of ways in which Quebecers would lose economically by leaving the confederation and told them: "Watch out for the dream merchants, those who say it's no problem to destroy a great country and rebuild it later."

It was Mr Mulroney's second important speech in two days on the theme of Canada's crumbling national unity. On Tuesday, speaking in Toronto, he admonished English Canadians to understand that Quebecers "will never negotiate on their knees" with the rest of Canada.

Opinion polls have consistently shown a majority of Quebec people to be in favour of some form of sovereignty.

A draft set of demands for sweeping new powers for Quebec at the expense of the federal government is the immediate focus of attention.

Publication of the demands by Quebec's governing Liberal party late last month brought home to Canadians the force of the pro-sovereignty gale sweeping the province of 6½ million people. The Conservative federal government in Ottawa is now desperately trying to seize the initiative.

The seriousness of the growing danger to Canada's present political structure was underlined on January 29 in Quebec

city, when a special committee of the ruling Liberals set out its proposals for a wholesale invasion of federal areas of jurisdiction.

The plan, which will be presented for adoption at a party convention opening on March 8, would leave the Ottawa government with sole control over just four areas: defence, customs, currency and equalisation payments to Canada's poorer regions. The list of demands was greeted with disbelief in most of the nine English-speaking provinces.

Mogadishu security clampdown

Nairobi — The interim Somali government has divided the ruined capital of Mogadishu into five security zones in an attempt to end anarchy after the overthrow of Mohamed Siad Barre, the former president, last month.

Mogadishu radio reported that the United Somali Congress had stopped the movement of armed people other than security forces.

Visitors to Mogadishu said more than 100 people died last weekend in clashes between the congress and the Somali Patriotic Movement. (Reuters)

Seal cull halted

Cape Town — South Africa has suspended temporarily all seal culling on its coast pending further research into the issue, Louis Piemarr, the environment minister, said. The study, to include more acceptable methods of culling other than clubbing and stabbing, should be concluded within two years. (AFP)

Military offer

Manila — America has offered the Philippines between \$160 million (\$25 million) and \$320 million a year for the use of military bases, depending on the duration of a new lease. However, according to diplomatic sources, Raul Manglapus, the Philippine foreign secretary, wants at least double before the renewal of the lease, which will expire in September. (AFP)

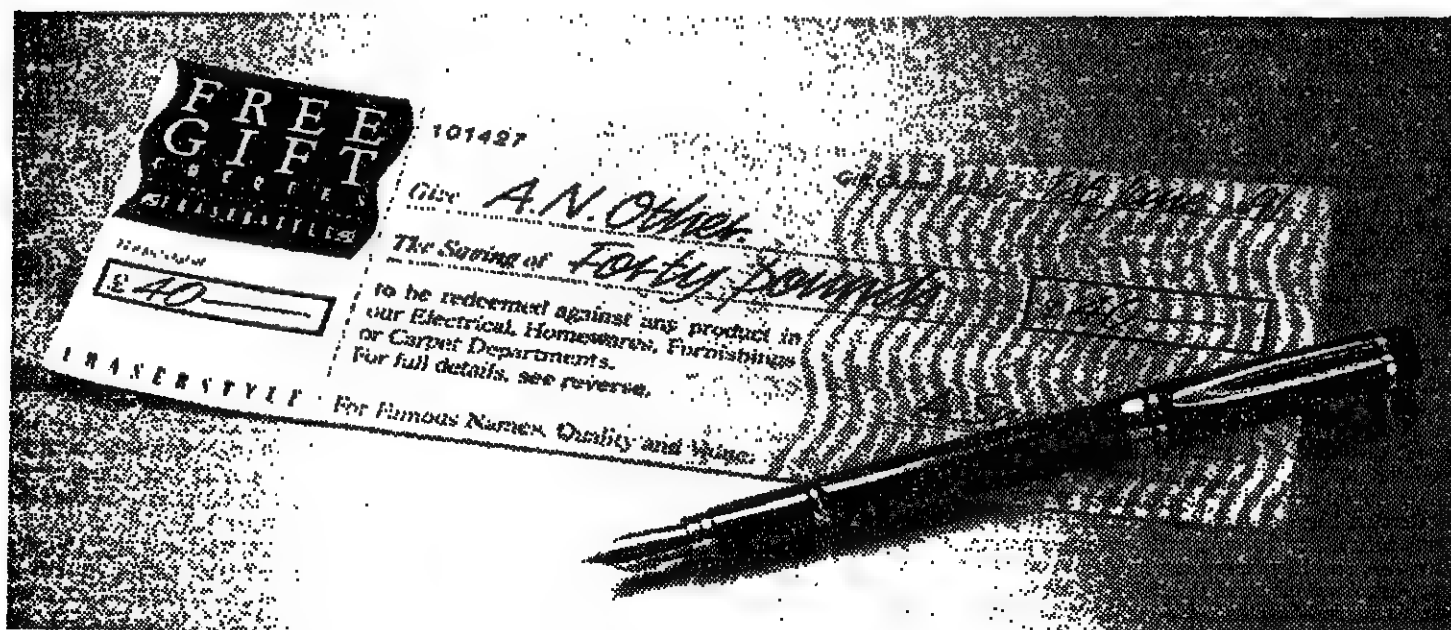
Sikh attack

Delhi — Sikh militants shot dead two bank guards in a Punjab village near Bhatinda and lost three of their own men in a gun fight with police, the Press Trust of India reported. In other incidents, a police constable and two civilians were killed by militants fighting for a separate Sikh homeland in the troubled northern Indian state. (AFP)



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Channel 3 Advertisement of Licences

The Independent Television Commission (ITC) proposes to grant 15 regional licences and one national breakfast-time licence to provide television programme services on Channel 3 from 1 January 1993.

Each licence will be for a term of ten years and will be awarded by competitive tender in accordance with the terms of the Broadcasting Act 1990.

The ITC accordingly invites applications for licences for the areas, at the times of day and on the days of the week, listed below.

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Central Scotland All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)	North-West England All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)
Channel Islands All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)	Northern Ireland All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)
East, West & South Midlands All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)	South & South-East England All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)
East of England All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)	South-West England All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)
London (Weekday) 9.25 am Mondays - 5.15 pm Fridays (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)	Wales & West of England All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)
London (Weekend) 5.15 pm Fridays - 6 am Mondays (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)	Yorkshire All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)
North of Scotland All week (excluding 6 am - 9.25 am)	National breakfast-time 6 am - 9.25 am All week

There are two separate documents, in respect of the invitation to apply, one for the regional licences, the other for the national breakfast-time licence, and a draft licence pertaining to each of these two types of service. There are, in addition, notes on regional transmission coverage available for each region. These may be obtained on written request from The Secretary, Independent Television Commission, 70 Brompton Road, London SW3 1EY.

A number of other relevant documents are listed in the invitations to apply. These can be obtained from the ITC's Information Office at the same address. Applications addressed to the Secretary to the Commission, giving the information in the form specified in the appropriate invitation to apply document in relation to any licence applied for, together with the application fee, should reach the ITC at the above address not later than noon on 15th May 1991.

itc
Independent Television Commission

Soviet consumers face 300 per cent increase in prices

From MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

THE Soviet leadership is planning across-the-board price rises of up to 300 per cent in an attempt to reduce state subsidies and bring some order to the ailing consumer market. The rises, for which no date has been announced but which are expected sooner rather than later, will affect almost all categories of goods, including food.

Yesterday the Russian Federation parliament met in closed session all day to discuss a draft agreement on nationwide price rises formulated by the central Soviet government. According to one participant, the Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, refused to support the document, arguing that the central authorities were trying to make republic governments take the blame for the increases and the public anger that will follow.

The existence of a draft national agreement on price rises was confirmed this week by the mayor of Moscow, Gavril Popov, who also objected that local authorities would bear the brunt of anger because they administer the shops. They have no control, however, over the depots and the manufacturing infrastructure, most of which is in the hands of the central or republic authorities.

According to the information supplied to the Russian parliament yesterday, there is a comprehensive list of commodities which are placed in three price categories. The top category, for non-essentials, will be subject to "negotiated prices" agreed between manufacturer and retail outlet and effectively allowed to float free. Beneath these will be regulated prices, with a fixed ceiling, and fixed state prices. The middle category is said to be the largest, with only the most basic goods set at fixed state prices. A sum of 60 billion roubles (£60 billion) is said to have been set aside to "compensate" people for the increases through their wages, allowances or pensions. One deputy said this would allow an average of only 30 roubles a month per person, or 15 per cent of the average wage.

The central leadership appears to hope that the parliament of the Soviet Union's 15 republics will individually agree to the price rises and deflect popular discontent from the central government. There may, however, be a more devious purpose.

If the governments of the Russian Federation and other radically minded republics are made to take responsibility for sweeping price rises, popular discontent might be sufficient to topple them. As Mr Yeltsin clearly appreciates, his sanction for higher prices with inadequate compensation could end his career as Russia's most popular politician.

Price rises have been expected, and dreaded, by the Soviet population since last May, when the then prime minister, Nikolai Ryzhkov, announced steep increases from the beginning of 1991. This is the third attempt to impose them. Panic buying and civil unrest thwarted Mr Ryzhkov's first attempt.

In November, the government announced that certain "non-essential" goods would be sold at "negotiated prices", but several republics refused to implement the decision. At the turn of the year, the head of the state prices commission said rises of up to 60 per cent would be introduced in the first half of the year, but promised they would not take effect in January.

This week the new Soviet prime minister, Valentin Pavlov, promised that the rises would not be introduced without a social consensus, that they would be announced in advance, and there would be generous compensation.

'Black colonel' forecasts revolt

From REUTER IN MOSCOW

VIKTOR Imantovich Alksnis, branded the "Black Colonel" by liberal foes, paints a chilling picture of a Soviet Union racked by civil war. From the ruins, he sees emerging a brutal "dictatorship of the street scum".

The dire prophecies of Colonel Alksnis, head of parliament's influential Soyuz (Union) faction, catch the spirit of the age for some headline Communists now fighting the tide of reform.

Despite his military epaulettes, the colonel is free to press a fierce campaign against the man he says is leading the country to ruin: President Gorbachev. Critics already see the colonel's hand in the resignations of an interior minister and the former foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze.

"I'm not a prophet... but I'd say we're approaching the day of rebellion," he says in his hotel room by the Kremlin walls. "The nature of the Russian rebellion, as the poet Pushkin said, is brutal, and merciless. It knows no reason, no leaders—it certainly won't be the work of any Black Colonels."

"They will smash McDonald's," he says, an ironic smile flickering on his face at the mention of the new American fast-food outlets in Moscow. "They will smash hotels and food stores, they will crush all in their path. What may follow from that is effectively a dictatorship of the street scum."

The colonel says the current stalemate in the rebel Baltic region, where 21 people died in army violence last month, showed Mr Gorbachev's helplessness. Gripped by the same paralysis, the economy may soon collapse, throwing millions into despair, he said. "Gorbachev should go now but in any case he has only months left."

Radical reformers, their star waning since electoral triumphs in March, see Colonel Alksnis's vision as a veiled argument for repression by the army, and the colonel himself as the simple servant of a master who has ruled Russia for 73 years—the Communist party.

His style raises eyebrows even among fellow Communists. "Alksnis is sometimes a little over-emotional," Moscow city Communist party chief, Yuri Prokofyev, remarked this week.

The colonel, aged 40, dark-haired and slightly built, receives guests with a mild relaxed smile, turning off the rock music video channel on his television.

He describes himself as a political "dilettante" thrown onto the stage by circumstances. But he is an intense man, his emotions never far from the surface.

He shifts, agitated, in his chair, his face trembling slightly at the suggestion perestroika is threatened by tanks. "I won't be told that's what the army wants," he says, adding that many people want the army as a protector.

The scale of Colonel Alksnis's support is unclear. Few politicians would yet dare openly back his views, but senior officers in three Lithuanian cities expressed sympathy in interviews.

Talks on troop cuts under way

Vienna — Nato and Warsaw Pact negotiators opened a second round of talks aimed at reducing the level of troops in Europe (Brenda Fowler writes). As mandated in the last conventional forces in Europe treaty signed in Paris, the follow-on talks — known as CFE-1a — will seek to limit military personnel in Europe and set up a system of aerial inspection.

Troop levels are likely to be discussed first, while the aerial inspection operation depends on progress in the open skies talks, which were held last year in Ottawa and Budapest, a Western diplomat said.

Vatican visit

Rome — The Albanian bishop of Scutari, who was released from prison last December after 25 years' incarceration by the communists, has paid a first visit to the Vatican. Mgr Simoni Jubani met the Pope and senior Vatican officials. Nearly a third of the 3.5 million population of Albania is Roman Catholic.

Noriega witness

Miami — The last main co-defendant in custody in the trial of Manuel Noriega pleaded guilty to a single drug charge and agreed to testify against the deposed Panamanian leader. Amet Paredes faced 95 years in prison on a variety of counts, but under the agreement prosecutors will recommend a maximum of ten years. (AP)

Ershad protest

Dhaka — Troops opened fire killing three people and injuring 11 others as a military convoy was attacked by demonstrators in northern Bangladesh demanding the trial of Hussain Muhammad Ershad, the former president who left office last December, police and witnesses said.

Secession costs

Belgrade — Yugoslav leaders agreed to draw up estimates of how much it would cost each of the country's six republics to secede, Alija Izetbegovic, the president of Bosnia-Herzegovina, said. He was speaking after a fourth round of talks between federal leaders and presidents of the six republics ended in stalemate. (Reuters)

Ukraine is to hold its own referendum

From ROBERT SEELY IN KIEV

THE Ukraine moved a step closer to independence when the republic's supreme soviet decided to stage a separate referendum to run jointly with the union wide vote called by President Gorbachev.

The ballot will give the republic's 52 million population, the second largest in the Soviet Union, the chance to vote on Ukrainian independence for the first time since 1918.

"At this stage it is a victory because we expected another blow from the communists, we were prepared for the worst," said Oles Shevchenko, one of the pro-independence deputy leaders. All three Baltic republics plus Georgia, Armenia and Moldavia have now refused to take part in marches union wide referendums.

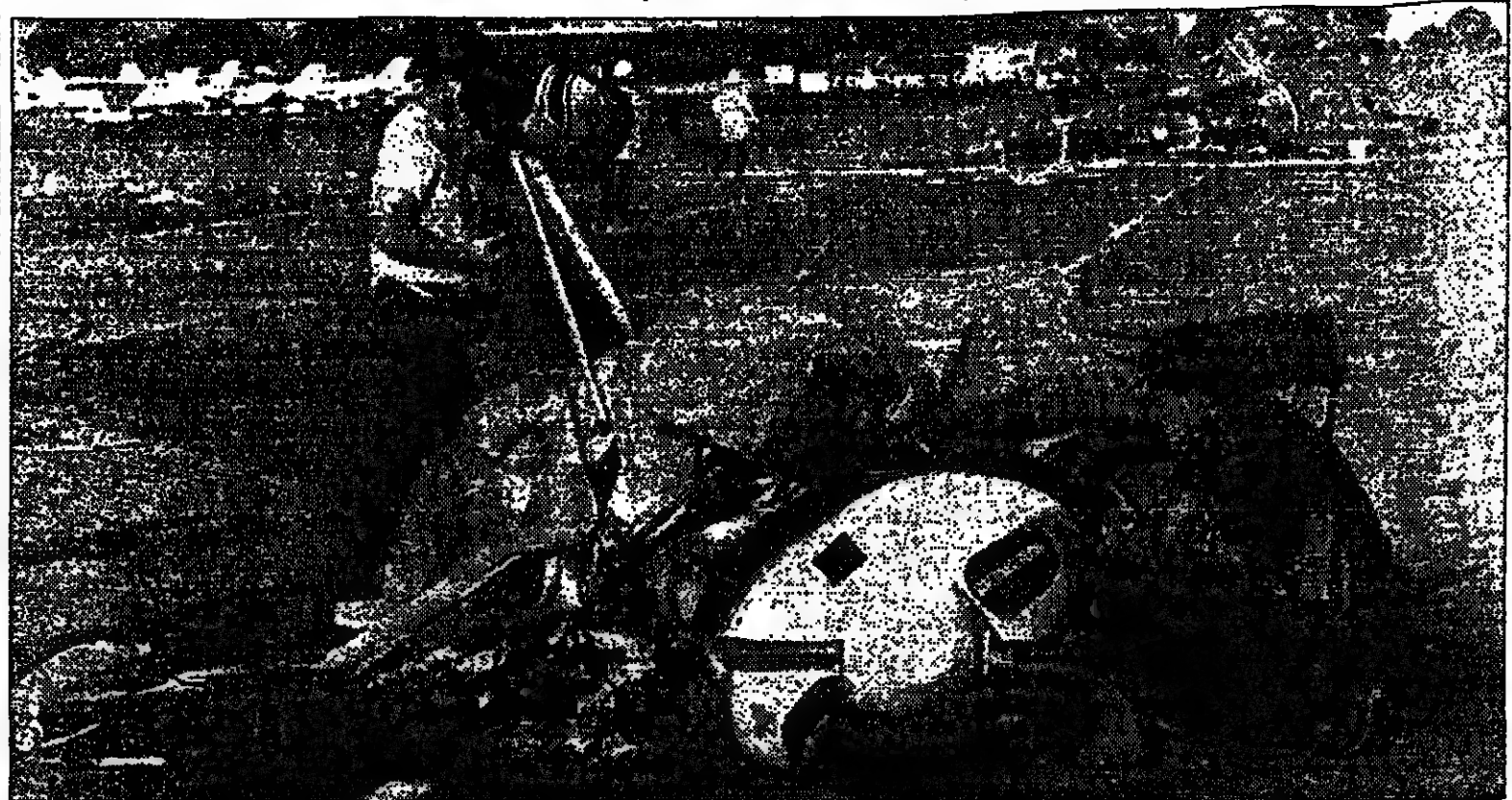
The nationalist triumph in the Ukraine, which is strategically vital to the future of the Soviet Union, may prove to be temporary. As with Lithuania's referendum last weekend, the Soviet central authorities could ignore the results of the Ukraine's ballots and claim it to be merely an opinion poll.

Larisa Skoryk, a par-



Valentin has refused to support draft agreement

Leading article, page 15



Runway enquiry: emergency workers looking at the wreckage after a small plane, foreground, and a helicopter carrying Kirk Douglas collided in mid-air at Santa Paula airport, California. Both people in the plane died, while the film star, his friend Noel Blanc and the helicopter pilot were injured

Pact's demise spurs defence rethink

From ROGER BOYES IN WARSAW

LEADERS from the heart of Europe — Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary — meet today to work out a new security concept for the region now that the death sentence has been passed on the Warsaw Pact.

Although other issues, from cross-border pollution to energy co-operation, are on the agenda, it is the broad defence question that is occupying the thoughts of the Central European reformers. How should they reorient their foreign

policies, now that the alliance structure has collapsed? How should they defend their reforms and their countries, if President Gorbachev is ousted by military-backed hard-liners?

The point was underlined yesterday by Professor Krzysztof Skubiszewski, the Polish foreign minister, who said that Poland wanted a fast agreement with Moscow on the withdrawal of 50,000 Soviet troops. If no accord is forthcoming, Polish officials say, Poland could prove very unco-operative in transporting the Soviet forces from

Germany. The formal decision to dismantle the pact's military structure will be taken at a session of its consultative council this month. Even the Soviet Union, bowing to pressure from the Central European democracies, has agreed that there can be no further delay in scrapping it.

But what can be put in place of the pact? That is the chief topic in the presidential and prime ministerial summit in Visegrad on Friday. The Soviet Union seems to favour a network of bilateral agreements, analogous to the mu-

tual assistance treaties with Finland.

But the Central European democracies have different ideas. The Finnish scenario smacks too much of political compliance and seems to put curbs on sovereignty.

The new Pentagonal group, linking Austria, Italy, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, provides a handy forum for transnational issues, such as transport and pollution, but plainly is ill-suited to tackle defence and security. At the moment, the only practical solution for the Central Europeans is a form of

armed neutrality. For this region at least, military alliances have outlived their usefulness.

In a separate development, 2,000 angry Silesian coalminers shouting "get out of your bathtub, Lech", stormed through the gates of Poland's presidential palace in Warsaw yesterday to protest against a nationwide system of strict wage controls.

It was the fiercest attack on the Solidarity government since Lech Walesa, the erstwhile Solidarity hero, was elected president two months ago.

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Major on the wrong track

Janet Daley

On the Thursday of The Great Snow, I was imprisoned in a BBC car for five hours while it crawled the 10 miles from Lime Grove studios to my home. Roads throughout London were reported to be solidly jammed. Because of the total collapse of public transport it seemed that every car for miles around had taken to the roads at once, giving us a taste of what life without a commuter rail system would be like.

By Wednesday, in spite of a thaw, rail services were still disrupted. British Rail, subjected to even more derision than usual, argued that it was not worth paying for a system to be permanently protected against winter conditions that might occur, briefly, once every four years or so.

In other words, we can complain as much as we like. The transport authorities are not going to change their spending priorities. Last weekend Mr Major told the Young Conservatives it was imperative that the quality of transport and other public services be improved. He presumably intends to accomplish this by extortion alone, since there is no sign that the government has recognised the disastrous consequences of imposing the rules of private commerce on what is still a public industry. By insisting that British Rail and London Regional Transport aspire to be self-supporting while remaining nationalised, Conservative policy neatly hands us the worst of both worlds.

It cuts subsidy in order to enforce spending discipline without allowing for the fact that BR and LRT are still lumbered with the structures that undermine aggressive commercial management. Public transport does not have the regional flexibility that a devolved private organisation would permit wage bargaining and working conditions must be negotiated within the framework of national union agreements, even by LRT. When London commuter services become so crowded that they are dangerous, management's proposed is to use the price mechanism to control over-use in plain words, to make public transport expensive to use if fewer people will be inclined to use it.

Hence BR manages to subvert both sets of values. It ignores any obligation to serve those less well-off, and makes nonsense of the profit-making requirement. What kind of private company, finding that its product was enormously popular, would deliberately price itself out of the market because it could not meet demand? Even a privatised monopoly has an obligation to its shareholders to maximise profits. Commuter rail services find themselves (or rather, their customers find them) to be neither fish nor fowl: neither a social service nor a thriving capitalist enterprise.

The rail unions are one obstacle to BR meeting demand in a straightforward capitalist manner. They resist any moves toward regionalisation, which would undermine their centralised authority, clinging to Buggins' turn

"Our railways are neither a properly supported public service nor a ruthlessly efficient private business"

promotion procedures and refuse to accept common-sense disciplinary actions. They are clearly still working on the old assumption that public industries exist as much to benefit employees as customers. Management finds it easier to go along with the industry's culture of complacency than to hold out against the conflicting demands of government and unions.

With their power over a monopoly public service, the rail unions attract professional agitators who see the railways as a satisfyingly prominent political arena. A personable young man I know became a railway guard after leaving higher education in order to apply his Maoist political philosophy. He left BR a few years ago, but still talks nostalgically of how left-wing factions, from the Socialist Workers' Party to the anarcho-syndicalists, fought for ascendancy among the railway staff at King's Cross. How many semi-skilled jobs in industry offer that chance of high-profile political power?

Union obstinacy and management incompetence have done much to discredit the idea of subsidy, but there is a more high-minded objection as well: that government support is hogged by the south-east services needed to get people to work in London. InterCity services are profitable chiefly because they rely on expensive account business travellers. Why should the hapless residents of Booter and Bangor be forced to pay through taxes for an uneconomic commuter system in the most affluent part of the country?

A fair enough point on the face of it, but oddly, this argument is not applied to other areas of taxation. Why, for example, do we ask the childless to help pay for school funding? Presumably because a political decision has been made that universal state education is for the good of the whole nation. By the same token, the critical national need for an efficiently functioning capital city surely justifies proper subsidy. The Royal Institute of British Architects has just launched a report, *Breaking the Transport Deadlock*, in which it states persuasively that "towns and cities without efficient public transport systems will be condemned to terminal decline with grave consequences for the economic well-being of the nation".

Countries such as France and Italy, which make publicly funded transport work, throw profit motive out of the window and shower their systems with money, not only for infrastructure but to keep fares down. The need for public transport is greatest, after all, among the lowest paid. As it is, our railways are neither a properly supported public service nor a ruthlessly efficient, competitive, private business.

The government should decide either to subsidise services such as transport fully, or privatise them. Successful models exist for both. Until it makes up its mind, we shall be caught between two political dogmas with a self-defeating British compromise.

You would not have caught Albert standing idly by while his 'loyal commuters' shivered. That the Prince of Wales is *hors de combat* goes without saying, but I cannot see why a sore arm should prevent his coming to the aid of British Airways in its hour of need. Nothing strenuous, a few transatlantic flights, perhaps, comfily stretched out across the three Club seats he has paid for. Possibly even taking the helm of Concorde for a prestige English Heritage jaunt (See this seat of *Mars*); the Japanese would pay folding money for something like that, especially if the Princess Royal came round with the complimentary sushi and hot towels. It's not as if we hadn't coughed up for his flying lessons.

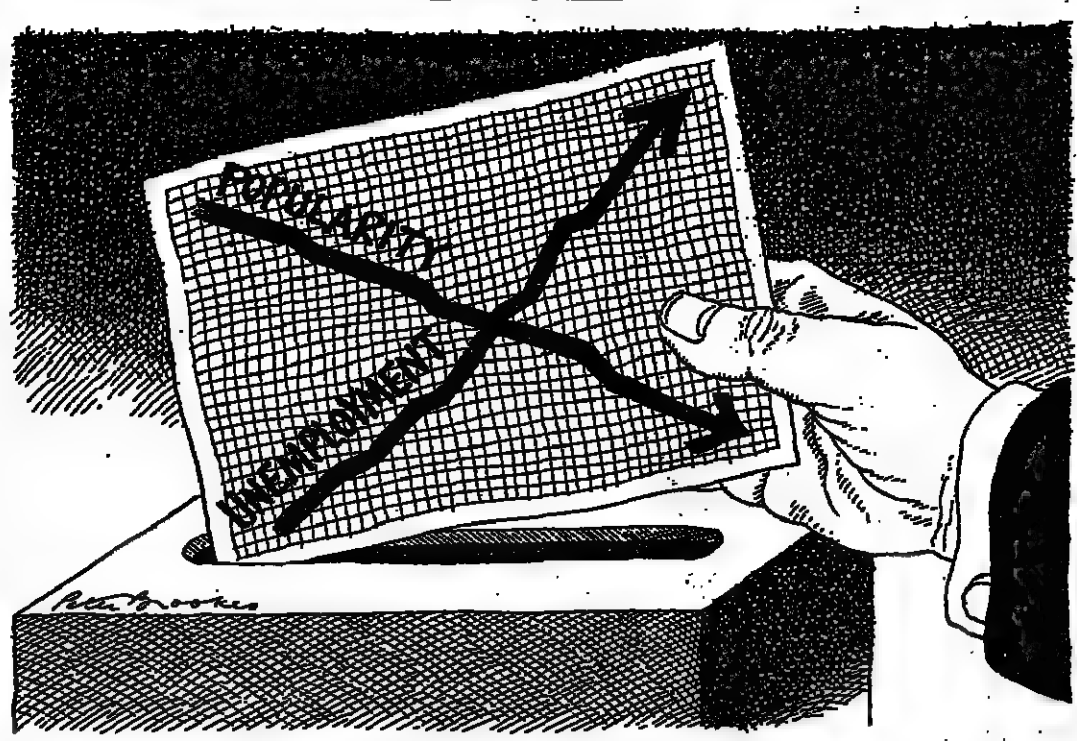
Meanwhile, his radiant wife could be taking British tennis by the scruff of the neck. Those of us with cigarette cards showing George VI gamely flinging himself about at Wimbledon are disheartened, are we not, that his descendants (and spouses) have done nothing to support our lads against Czechs and Swedes and such, except, once a year, to send a minor relative to ask a ball-boy if he's enjoying himself?

The Princess of Wales is well-known to have no mean forehead, and I doubt that I am alone in fancying her chances against Steffi, especially if the PM's new friend Helmut takes *das Eisenkind* on one side and suggests serving underarm in the interests of European unity.

And while I expect no such miracles for English cricket, I

Jobless, the Tory downfall?

As unemployment rises, Ivor Crewe sees key marginals under threat in the increasingly vulnerable south



A new factor has entered the increasingly complex equation confronting Conservative election strategists: unemployment. Having steadily ebbed from a 3.2 million high-water mark in the third quarter of 1986, the tide turned in June last year. Since then it has risen from a seasonally adjusted 1.62 million to 1.89 million in figures out yesterday.

Conservative Central Office might be excused for asking complacently whether lengthening queue actually lost votes. The econometric models of election results, so avidly digested in party headquarters, place little weight on unemployment compared with interest rates and inflation.

Conservatives might even be excused some cynicism. Their two victories of the 1980s demonstrated that a government could preside over mass unemployment and not merely survive, but prosper. The perhaps disagreeable moral of 1983 and 1987 was that the vast majority of voters who wanted jobs had jobs (and better living standards) and in the secrecy of the polling booth were not prepared to vote on behalf of the minority who did not.

The electoral reality is that high inflation hurts almost everybody; high taxes a substantial majority; high interest rates an increasing number; but high unemployment hurts relatively few.

However, a closer look at the electoral lessons of the 1980-82 recession suggests that Conservative complacency might be misplaced. One needs to distinguish between the electorate as a whole, who did not punish the Conservatives in 1983 for unemployment, and the unemployed, who clearly did: while the Conservative vote fell by 1.1 per cent in the country at large, it fell by 10 per cent among the unemployed. In the unemployment blackspots of Merseyside, central Scotland and Birmingham, constituencies bucked the national trend and swung to Labour.

Admittedly, the impact on the overall result was very limited. For one thing, almost half the unemployed failed to vote: registration and turnout rates were well below the national average, especially in the inner cities. For another, the majority of the unemployed who went to the polls were Labour voters living in

Labour areas. All but three of the 50 constituencies with the highest unemployment rates had been solidly Labour at the previous election. The backlash of the jobs against the Conservative government merely made safe Labour seats safer.

This time the psychology of unemployment looks different. The recession's initial casualties are the hi-tech and service sectors of the booming Tory south, not the traditional heavy industry of the north. More big lay-offs are reported for airways, finance and computing than for shipbuilding, steel and cars. The new unemployed, with financial commitments and high expectations, are unlikely abstainers.

The Conservatives' electoral problem is underlined in the table, which sets out the rise in unemployment since June 1990 in the 93 Conservative-held marginals that Labour must gain to win the next election. The table contains two pieces of bad news for Chris Patten, the Tory chairman. Unemployment has risen slightly

faster in the marginals than elsewhere, probably because they contain a higher than average proportion of the C1 and C2 socio-economic categories that have been worst hit by the recession. And unemployment has generally risen fastest in the regions containing the bulk of Conservative marginals.

North of the border, unemployment has barely increased but, after their battering by the Scots at the last election, the Conservatives have only five marginal seats left to defend against Labour. In the south, including London, where unemployment has risen by more than 25 per cent, 37 Conservative marginals are at risk. In the

Midlands, where its growth is less marked but still above the national average, there are 17. Specific constituencies make the point. Take, for example, the marginals along the M4 corridor of high-tech prosperity. Between June and December 1990, unemployment jumped by 29 per cent in Kingswood, a massive 53 per cent in Swindon, 40 per cent in Slough and 43 per cent in Feltham. Or consider the new town marginals in Essex and Hertfordshire: unemployment has risen by 36 per cent in Basildon, 41 per cent in Harlow and 55 per cent in Stevenage.

Labour must gain all of these seats to win a workable majority—

Percentage increase in unemployment June-December 1990 (seasonally adjusted)

	GB	Scott	North	Midlands	Wales	London	South
All seats	+14.8	+4.7	+9.7	+13.6	+20.9	+22.1	+27.9
Tory marginals	+18.9	+7.0	+12.4	+15.5	+26.5	+27.8	+34.9
Number	98	5	29	17	5	21	16

Source: Department of Employment Gazette, August 1990 and February 1991. *The 93 most marginal Conservative seats, which Labour must gain to win an overall majority.

and Labour held them all before 1979. Of course, these percentage rises in unemployment look big because of their low base. Absolute levels of unemployment remain lower in the south than the north (although the regional gap is narrowing) and lower now than at the 1987 general election. But another lesson from the early 1980s is that the trend mattered more than the level. When unemployment shot above 2 million in August 1980, with much attendant publicity, the impact on voters was almost immediate: increased pessimism about Britain's (and their own) economic prospects, a nose-dive of confidence in the government's economic competence and, a few weeks later, a Conservative downturn in the polls. When unemployment passed 3 million in January 1982, amid even more publicity, the pattern in the polls repeated itself. But once it stabilised and coasted at 3.3 million — and prices and interest rates began to fall — economic optimism, confidence in the government, and Conservative support all revived.

Trends matter more than levels because voters are moved by fear more than altruism. Rising unemployment means lay-offs and widespread insecurity, fanned by the media. High but stable levels of unemployment, on the other hand, mean dole queues, which after a short time make for feature stories rather than headlines. Government is safer if unemployment is 3 million but falling than 2 million and rising.

There is another, crucial, difference between the politics of this recession and the last. In the early 1980s the government managed to avoid much of the blame. It turned unemployment from an issue into a problem. For example, in August 1982 — after three years of Thatcherite economics — NOP found that fewer than a third of voters (31 per cent) blamed the Conservative government. The "world recession" was blamed by 20 per cent, workers and the unions by 18 per cent, and almost one-third did not know. And there was little faith in Labour's ability to do any better. This time, after 12 years in office, the government has no alibis or scapegoats.

The author is professor of government at the University of Essex.

Cold comfort when hundreds die

Philip Howard on a new direct hit for the language

When the Pentagon spokesman said he was quite "comfortable" about the decision to bomb, with pinpoint precision, the air raid shelter in the Baghdad suburb of Amriya, a shiver ran through British listeners and viewers. How could anyone be comfortable, in the sense that we use the word, about the ghastly death by fire of several hundred women and children?

The word was not well chosen, even for American ears. But there is no way that one can speak decently about the tragedies of war. Great tragedies and poets can manage it. But great tragedies and poets are not employed as spokesmen for the military. The best that ordinary people can do on such occasions is to weep or scream. Words are not adequate. But spokesmen are paid to come up with the words on demand. So the man said he was comfortable.

What he meant was that he was satisfied that the air raid shelter was a command bunker, that he

had convincing evidence that this was the case, and that this made it a legitimate military target.

Saddam can survive this war only by breaking the will of the coalition, as the will of the Americans was broken in Vietnam by the endless death and destruction of war. The deaths that broke the American will in Vietnam were mostly of young Americans. But tragedies such as My Lai and death and defilement from the air for peasant villages had their effect.

So the spokesmen and PR officials have been carefully coached to use verbal camouflage when describing the horrors of war. Humankind cannot bear very much reality, particularly when there is a war on. So we avoid blunt description, and close our eyes and ears to the fact that there are people getting burnt alive out there. In Gulf war euphemism, the only things that get killed are machines.

We do not kill or blast people, we degrade or conduct erosion, as in, "We shall not launch the ground offensive until we have struck the Republican Guard to the point when they no longer have an effective offensive capacity."

When civilians are killed or wounded in a raid on a legitimate military target, as is bound to happen, and has happened in all wars from the Trojan war onwards, our modern media manipulators cannot bear to mention it plainly, as Virgil did. We now call it collateral damage. This is thought to sound better.

But there was more to "comfortable" than official euphemism, I think. They use the word differently in the States, because of the pernicious effects of psycho-babble, the first talk of the age of self-analysis and feeling. In British English, comfortable is one of a nest of words used to describe

contentment, relief, or well-being. Comfortable is the most general of these words, and can be applied to all kinds of personal feelings, and to anything that contributes to those feelings. I feel comfortable in these shoes. This seat is not comfortable. She has a comfortable income. The patient passed a comfortable night. More specific words in the nest are cosy, restful, and snug. None of them are words that a British English speaker would comfortably apply to mass death by blast and fire.

America is the self-consciousness-raising capital of the world, and Psychobabble is its jargon. It is an inward-looking, self-absorbed jargon. So it uses metaphors of integrating something as disorganised as the speaker's emotions and feelings are supposed to be, as in get it together, get my head together, and get your act together. You are advised to hang loose, or

let it all hang out. Comfortable is, I think, a word of this do-it-yourself ego-analysis philosophy, in which the speaker is reporting his feelings about something. I am comfortable with that. It is one way of putting it. But it sounds banal and heartless when the "that" in question is a tragic horror.

A critic of Psychobabble has complained that it is "a set of repetitive verbal formalities that kills off the very spontaneity, candour and understanding it pretends to promote. It's an idiom that reduces psychological insight into a collection of standardised observations, that provides a frozen lexicon to deal with an infinite variety of problems."

When tragedy strikes, the language needed is simple, plain, sad, and looking outwards, not inwards. General Norman Schwarzkopf has shown himself rather good at it. Some of the Pentagon spokesmen need a course in plain-speaking to make them a bit less comfortable.

...and moreover

ALAN COREN

The grinning tory came past again this morning, but she still wasn't on it. My neighbours, who had lined the chill pavements since first light, trooped back glumly into their premises; one or two threw their Union flags into the frozen gutter; a small boy who piped an unanswerable enquiry had his car boxed. His father is normally the mildest of men.

It occurred to me that her absence might be put down to the fact that Crickwood is not a royal borough; but when I rang a Kensington friend to enquire whether anyone had graciously defrosted his mews, I discovered that neither hide nor hair of her had been seen. Astonishing £1.8 million a day coming in, and still not prepared, while her queen-dom shivers, to do, quite literally, a hand's turn.

It is not as if she is a stranger to the above: those of us who down the years have thrown our hats in the air as she has embedded this commemorative York or that have always recognised her spawdwork for the businesslike thing it was.

She also has her own Land-Rover. We bought it for her. Just the job for conditions like this. Gritting in the morning, towing in the afternoon, even the odd meal on wheels, it doesn't seem too much to ask.

I do not expect her to do frozen points, mind. More of a duke's job, that: blow-lamp, crowbar, sledge-hammer. She could always drop him off at Clapham on her way to the gravel pit. Most consorts would be only too happy to muck in.

ANC leaves the door ajar

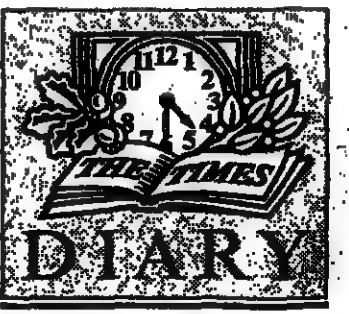
The African National Congress has dropped its blanket opposition to stage and other artists performing in South Africa in favour of an ideology test that would make some welcome while treating others like pariahs. The creation has put Equity and the Musicians' Union on the spot: both have long opposed visits to South Africa by their members, and neither has any immediate plans to change this policy.

Mandla Langa, the ANC cultural spokesman in London, says: "We would like international artists like Harry Belafonte and Stevie Wonder to travel to South Africa to help strengthen our democratic structures. This is not a relaxation of the boycott, merely a clarification."

However, the Musicians' Union says its total ban will remain at least until the issue can be debated at a delegate conference in late July. Rosie Brocklehurst of Equity says: "We can't stop individual members from going, but after a referendum of our 45,000 members we have a standing instruction to advise them not to work there." Any change of policy would need a further referendum, and the union has no such plans.

Actress and Labour candidate Glenda Jackson, whose consistent support for the cultural boycott would see her sail through the ANC's ideology test, says and says to the fact that there are people getting burnt alive out there. In Gulf war euphemism, the only things that get killed are machines.

The royals are simply not pulling their weight in these dark days. Mind you, if they do, they will of course deprive us of something to moan about; but, then again, we could always moan about that.



● Much concern at Harrods yesterday for Viscount Stormont during his three-hour hostage ordeal. Some years ago he was a popular member of staff in the wine department, and the tale is still told of the day a certain dowager duchess, feeling she was not receiving the attention she deserved, demanded to speak to the manager. "I want to complain to you about that boy," she boomed. "Oh you mean Stormont," came the reply. "Yes, Mungo Stormont," said the duchess. "Good grief, he's my godson."

Cross purposes Fashion designer Katharine Hammett, who once arrived at a Downing Street reception in a T-shirt with the slogan "£8 per coat don't want Pershing", has caused a rumpus with another. It is emblazoned with the word



"Ceasefire" and the Red Cross emblem, with the announcement that all profits from its sale will go to Red Cross funds.

The offer has been rejected. "The use of our emblem is strictly controlled," says the Red Cross. "According to the Geneva Convention statutes of 1911, it isn't lawful to use the cross for purposes of trade without the authority of the Ministry of Defence." — even, it seems, if the intention is to raise funds for the organisation.

Hammett has now changed the wording to read: "All proceeds from the sale of this T-shirt will go to a charity." But which one? She is not saying. Should she still have the Red Cross in mind, it will happily accept: "It's just the use of our emblem we are worried about."

Shore thing Labour's civil war is about to erupt again in London's East End. To Neil Kinnock's relief, most MPs have safely negotiated reelection, but a handful of troublesome cases remain. Among them is former cabinet minister Peter Shore in Bethnal Green and Stepney, who is being challenged by Phil Maxwell, left-wing Labour leader on Tower Hamlets council.

"People in the constituency were angered to see Peter Shore on television arguing that East Enders support troops fighting in the 'Gulf'," says Maxwell, who is fighting on a stop-the-war ticket. "How does he know? He has not consulted anyone and does not even live in the East End."

Shore, who has been an MP for 26 years and fought off a previous reelection challenge, says: "I do not think Philip Maxwell is a serious opponent. I expect still to be here come the next election." He surely will be. Even if Shore is rejected by his local party, Maxwell's hard-left policies make it certain that Labour's national executive will reject his candidacy.

Good turn, bad turn As the Bishop of Lewes, the Right Rev Peter Ball, drove along a country road recently, a car approaching him hit the verge, flew over a hedge, and landed on its side. The bishop stopped and shone his headlights on the wreckage, from which a voice called: "Can you get something to break a window so that I can get out?"

The bishop went to his car and returned with his crook, by which time the driver had managed to free himself. "There I was in my monastic robe walking across the road with my crook. I must have looked quite a dramatic sight with the car headlights shining behind me," says the bishop. "When the driver saw me he turned totally white." More shaken by this celestial apparition than by his accident, the driver managed to whisper: "Where am I and who are you?"

"I think he was quite convinced he was in heaven," says the bishop. "I didn't dare tell him my name was Peter. That might have finished him off completely."

Get up and go out Enough of this gloom and doom. The time has come to stand up to the over-sensitive killjoys who think the Gulf war means that nobody at home should have any fun, according to the Cheer Up London Committee, to be launched today.

Those appealing to the second world war "We never cheer" spirit of the Windmill theatre include Lord Spencer-Churchill, Egon Ronay and the Roux brothers. "We want to encourage people to return to the habit of going out and having fun during a difficult period," says a spokeswoman for the committee, which intends producing a regular bulletin of restaurants, hotel and theatre discounts on offer because of the absence of terrified Americans.

15 FEB 1991



IMAGES OF WAR

"We must fight to the last drop of our blood," said the colonel thumping the dinner table, "we must be willing to die for our Emperor and zen all will be well." ... There was a sudden silence. "Mamma, what sweets are we going to have?" asked Natasha.

From Tolstoy's juxtaposition of war and peace to Wednesday's tragedy at Amiriya, the inability to imagine war contrasts with the bloody, mangled relics of human beings. Soldiers may use euphemisms, excuses, jargon to purify their work. They may claim their goal is territorial or economic or political. Humanitarian factors may distort tactics, ban certain weapons and lessen public revulsion at civilian deaths. But the finest technology, the best intelligence cannot alter war's essence: at the end of each day is a pile of corpses, just as in 1914, 1812 or 490 BC.

Those deciding on war should never forget this reality. A virtue of modern communication is that it makes the sanitisation of war harder to achieve. After the first "televised" war, in Vietnam, some concluded that no modern democracy would ever fight again, in however just a cause. The Falklands and now the Gulf show this is not true. But Vietnam did teach that no modern democracy was likely to go to war unless convinced of its rightness and unless allowed to monitor its conduct. It was not war that undermined American resolve in Vietnam, but its duration, the manner in which it was fought and the improbability of victory.

Censorship, in the form of guidance, warning and self-discipline, has a role in any conflict. No military machine can reveal all its secrets, and can reveal some only by ensuring others remain secret. But if censorship degenerates into deceit and fabrication, into the concealment of war's nature, it will undermine public support and engender opposition.

Such was the horror at Amiriya that censorship broke down on all sides. To the Iraqis, what happened was so blatantly useful to their cause that the media were allowed to report unguardedly. Given the lack of free reporting from Baghdad, this "lifting" of censorship was more a comment

on previous reports than an aid to understanding. Good journalism needs free investigation and communication over time so that readers can set reports in context. One unadorned story does not equal the end of censorship. Above all, there is no media freedom to record any of the emotive images of pain, grief and suffering which must have occurred, unadorned, in Kuwait. The images of horror therefore count on one side of the scales only.

For the Americans, faced (at very least) with a glaring failure of targeting intelligence before the Amiriya bombing, the terminology of war collapsed on Wednesday. Words such as "comfortable" and "satisfied" fell from the lips of spokesmen apparently insured to war's horror. Initially even the ultimate fallacy was implied — that because President Saddam Hussein kills innocent civilians, the allies can be forgiven Amiriya.

In the absence of Iraqi censorship some media organisations imposed their own on Wednesday's footage, on grounds not of balance but of taste, feeling that the reality of what war does to a human frame was too horrible to share with the public. None the less there were further calls from politicians on both sides of the Atlantic, such as those addressed to ITN and the BBC in the House of Commons yesterday, to suppress pictures and other news material from Iraq. The partiality of such material damages the war effort, say the politicians; in the age of terrorism, all wars are total wars and require total vigilance.

These calls should be resisted. Certainly the continuous repetition on "live" news programmes of vivid pictures can magnify both the glamour and the horror of war. There is thus a heavy responsibility on news handlers to check, correct and present material without exaggeration and with appropriate caveats. But concealment is hopeless. Today, images of war are flashed round the globe in seconds, to be distorted, exploited, debated, challenged. The only antidote to false information is accurate information, not less information. Lies can only be defeated by a relentless search for truth, not by silence.

BACKDOOR GLASNOST

To be denounced by Pravda has long been an honour. To be vilified for sending medical aid to the Baltic states, as the Bush administration was yesterday, is a double distinction. This "violation of the sovereignty of the USSR" was Washington's low-key response last week to the Soviet government's attacks on democracy in Lithuania and Latvia.

Attempts by western governments to bypass the central Soviet authorities in order to help the republics in their battle against Moscow are fraught with risk. How far can the republics be supported before that support becomes "unwarranted interference" in the Union's internal affairs? How far does such support undermine Mikhail Gorbachev's position? At what point does formal assistance to a republic become "recognition", and thus risk an open break with the regime in Moscow?

The answer is that, while diplomats and politicians may feel they alone should be left to answer these questions, private citizens and institutions may see things differently. Uncertainty about the future of self-determination for the republics has prevailed in the Soviet Union since at least November. Many in the West have wanted to push the process of self-determination, even though formal diplomacy feels constrained from intervening too publicly in this sensitive relationship.

In the liberation of Eastern Europe, individuals and private bodies established conduits through which information, books, travel and other forms of cultural exchange could pass. The British Council, champion of such "alternative diplomacy", was also active. The Foreign Office even has its modest "know-how" fund. The Baltic states are among the areas of the Soviet Union in which such contacts are becoming regular occurrences. Any attempt by the KGB to cut them off should be condemned in the West.

The success of such private links, whose impact on morale is hard to imagine

in comfortable Western Europe, must have been thrown in doubt by this week's grotesque attempt by the Soviet prime minister, Valentin Pavlov, to create a climate of xenophobia. Whatever lies behind Mr Pavlov's tale of a western-backed conspiracy to undermine the ruble — it has led to the resignation of Boris Yeltsin's aide Gennady Filshin — the response of Western banks and other investors was one of understandable alarm.

The future of glasnost will be further tested by the planned visit in April of a delegation of Christian, Jewish and Muslim representatives, under the aegis of the Bishop of Oxford, to the cities of Baku, Lvov and Moscow. Besides the Russian Orthodox patriarchate, which is close to the Soviet state, the visiting clergy and laymen hope to meet religious communities which are barely tolerated by the Soviet authorities, such as the Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox churches, the Baptists and others.

The gathering could yet be hindered by the denial of visas. Later this year the Kremlin hopes to play host to a human rights conference under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Such a conference should be made hostage to Soviet good behaviour in the meantime.

If even those who wish to help the Soviet economy are to be frightened off, the outlook must be gloomy for those who have little to offer but moral support for the opposition. That leaves government-to-government aid. Experience suggests that aid which is not distributed directly to its intended recipients will never reach them. The Latvian foreign minister, Janis Jurkans, recently suggested that little of the western help sent to relieve the Armenian earthquake was ever received by the survivors. This is outrageous. To bypass the corrupt Soviet bureaucracy in future, in cultural as well as economic relations, is a dictate not only of principle but also of common sense.

NO SMOKE WITHOUT FUSS

In 1940s films the prevailing colour was pale grey. Any romantic male or female was likely to be wreathed in clouds of smoke. Smoking was considered sophisticated, and tobacco companies were glad of the publicity. Now, according to a Valentine's Day survey published yesterday, most Britons think the reverse. More than 70 per cent prefer a non-smoker for a partner. That London Transport was able yesterday to institute a ban on smoking on its buses with barely a protest from passengers is testament to this attitudinal change.

Some have always disliked the smell of other's smoke, but until recently they dared not complain for fear of an aggressive response. Some used not to mind sitting in smoke-filled rooms, but have now become sensitised to it by the threat to their health. The theory that passive smoking was dangerous used to be contentious; now there is a scientific near-consensus, disagreement confined mainly to the scale of danger.

A 17-year survey of nearly 8,000 people in Glasgow, published in 1989, found that non-smokers who live with smokers are more than twice as likely to die of lung cancer than those who live with non-smokers. An earlier independent study commissioned by the government put the increased risk of lung cancer from passive smoking at anything up to 30 per cent. The smoke of a burning

cigarette tip is even more noxious than that which is inhaled by the smoker.

Before such dangers were discovered, the libertarian argument was finely balanced. The smoker could set his pleasure from smoking against the non-smoker's pleasure in breathing smoke-free air. The only health risk was the smoker's. Notwithstanding the cost to the National Health Service of treating smokers, most agreed that they had every right to take that risk. As for legal intervention, the nanny state had gone far enough in restricting cigarette advertising and shouting warnings from every packet.

This is no longer enough — the rights of non-smokers are now regarded as predominant. Some tolerance is still in order: nicotine is the most physically addictive of widely-consumed narcotics and its sufferers deserve a modicum of sympathy. British Rail is right to reserve some smoking compartments on long-distance trains. Passengers can choose whether or not to sit with smokers. Aeroplanes with proper air conditioning are right to allow smokers their own section; it would be unreasonable to expect them to abstain on a long-haul flight. But in a small, poorly-ventilated public area, such as the top deck of a bus, a ban on smoking is hardly a draconian infringement of liberty. Since yesterday, London Town has become just a little less foggy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Disagreements over interest rates and sterling levels

From Mr K. Skene and Mr G. Dennis

Sir, The six economists who called (February 13) for a cut in interest rates and a "sharp" depreciation of sterling must be delighted that the UK authorities saw fit to acquiesce in their first demand so promptly (report, February 14). That was, however, the uncontroversial part; it is plain for all to see that significantly lower interest rates are essential in the UK to mitigate the current recession.

We must hope, however, that the authorities ignore the second, and much more questionable, piece of advice from Professor Walters and co. The government has made a commitment to the discipline of ERM (exchange-rate mechanism) membership, which will reap rewards in terms of lower inflation. This will take time (witness the French experience) and may, unfortunately, involve output losses on the way. Nevertheless, to devalue sterling at the first sign of trouble in the domestic economy would increase inflationary pressures again and run the risk of repeating the French errors of 1981-3.

Sterling is not over-valued at a central ERM rate of DM2.95; after all, UK exports (ex-erotics) did rise in real terms by 6.5 per cent in 1990. In truth, this central rate represents a fair value that nicely balances the need to bring inflation down with some help for the export sector. Moreover, to bring the undoubted over-valuation of sterling against the dollar into this argument is a total red herring.

All European currencies are over-valued against the dollar; this is not a problem of strong sterling but of weak dollar. This situation requires, if anything, action at the international level. To use UK monetary policy alone to deal with the under-valuation of the dollar would be patently absurd.

While the six economists' call for lower interest rates was justified, their secondary call for a depreciation of sterling could easily have the perverse effect of driving interest rates back up again; as a piece of advice it should be dismissed.

Yours etc.
KEITH SKEOE
(Chief Economist),
GEOFFREY DENNIS
(Chief International Economist),
James Capel and Co.,
James Capel House, PO Box 551,
6 Bevis Marks, EC3.

From Mr John Stevens, MEP for Thames Valley (European Democrat (Conservative))

Sir, Professor Tim Congdon and his five erstwhile monetarist colleagues should be aware more than most of the risk for economists making solemn statements on government policy in your columns.

A fishy business

From the Secretary of State for Health

Sir, Bernard Levin (February 14) chides me for the Food Hygiene (Amendment) Regulations 1990 which, he says, will stop smoked salmon being sent through the post when they come into force on April 1.

First, I think it is a bit thick to judge my degree of eulogisation on the basis of regulations laid before Parliament by my clear non-environmental predecessor, but I let that pass. As to what the regulation will or will not do, let us see.

Meanwhile, since I have a brother whose admirable cheese presently travels via the post, and a first cousin whose delectable smoked sea trout reaches me by the same route, I have, sadly, had to ask one of the other ministers here to deal with the issue. Otherwise, if it were to come out the way Mr Levin wants, it will not be eulogisation I will be accused of.

On one point, however, Mr Levin is completely correct. In common with all my colleagues, on both sides of the House, it is true that I have never once in my life been drunk.

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM WALDEGRAVE,
Department of Health,
Richmond House,
79 Whitehall, SW1,
February 14.

Squaring speeds

From Mr R. M. Worcester

Sir, Your leader ("Squaring speeds", February 8) alleges that "most (drivers) seem happy to agree with the police that the legal speed limit for cars on a motorway should be raised by 10 mph". The recent Lex report on motorway, to which you referred in a leader on January 24, showed that the majority of the British public (52 per cent) are of the view that the speed limit should not be broken except in exceptional circumstances, while a third (32 per cent) believe that "the speed limit is usually set below the safe level and it is acceptable to exceed it (eg, by 10 mph)".

A frightening 13 per cent are of the view that "speed limits don't mean much on most roads and drivers should judge for themselves what speed is acceptable on any stretch of road". They are no doubt those whom we see whizzing by when we are on the motorway.

The leader also comments "sleeping policemen" which, according to the Lex survey, are supported by more drivers than any other suggested means for controlling traffic in residential areas.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT M. WORCESTER
(Chairman),
Market & Opinion Research
International Ltd,
32 Old Queen Street, SW1,
February 8.

The former advocates of sound money are now proposing devaluation at a time when we still face an underlying inflation rate of some 7.5 per cent. The solid supporters of the intense squeeze of 1979-81 are now proclaiming their concern for the impact of draconian deflationary discipline on the British economy. Those who only last autumn were warning us that the inevitable consequence of our joining the ERM would be to force premature interest-rate cuts are now urging just that.

Sterling is not over-valued against the Deutschmark. The dollar is substantially undervalued, because of the US authorities' recent aggressive monetary easing in response to a banking crisis, in part precipitated by unsound financial market deregulation. The failure to appreciate that financial market deregulation can fatally flaw monetary aggregates as yardsticks of inflationary pressure in the economy is one of the main reasons the UK now suffers the present unacceptable level of price increase.

The high-profile critique of the ERM of which Professor Congdon's letter is the latest expression is not economic at all but political. It derives from a general ideological objection to European monetary integration. But it has specific and immediate economic effects. For by undermining international confidence in the government's commitment to the current ERM band it has rendered more difficult a reduction in interest rates. These will be able to fall further when international markets really believe that we are sticking to the strategy we have set.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN STEVENS,
15 St James's Place, SW1,
February 13.

From Mr Peter J. Kleeman

Sir, Professor Congdon and his colleagues are correct in calling for urgently needed interest-rate cuts and of course are fully aware that political realities preclude any withdrawal from the ERM.

Because the economic situation is so serious, tinkering with rates would not be sufficient and it is to be hoped that today's modest reduction is the beginning of a new trend.

By the end of this year inflation rates both in Germany and the UK should be around 5 per cent. The government and financial markets therefore need to determine the correct interest-rate premium to keep sterling within its ERM bands.

Before today's cut the differential for three months' money was in excess of 4½ per cent. As the two countries' inflation rates converge and with sterling bound by the ERM disciplines this premium could be considerably reduced, allowing UK

rates to fall to, say, 11 per cent by the end of the year.

Yours faithfully,
P. J. KLEEMAN (Chairman),
Allside Asset Management Co.,
7 Old Park Lane, W1,
February 13.

From Mr Earle de B. Bloomfield

Sir, Isn't it amazing how British, or more correctly English, industry can, without wincing, blame all its woes and failures on the government — each and every government? Not long ago it was the workers who were also blamed for their troubles. The Japanese have now shown that British workers are amongst the finest anywhere, given proper training, tooling and management.

Until English industry learns to stop feeling sorry for itself and making excuses for its own gross inefficiency, contempt for customer service and fear of the future, the economy will never amount to anything more than a pitiful on-going struggle.

Yours truly,
E. de B. BLOOMFIELD,
Kestorway, Chagford,
Newton Abbot,
Devon,
February 13.

From Professor Michael Artis and others

Sir, In order to redress the effects of Britain's entry into the ERM at too high an exchange rate some devaluation may be in order. However, this proposal fails to take account of Britain's fundamental problem: our inability to sustain acceptable levels of inflation without excessive unemployment. Indeed any devaluation will exacerbate our inflation problems and undermine Britain's international credibility.

The first priority must be to discourage pay leap-frogging and to facilitate a rapid disinflation. This can best be done through efforts to achieve consensus about a reasonable going rate and more coordination of the level of pay offers among employers, as in Germany and other more successful economies.

In addition it will be important to prevent the build-up of long-term unemployment. Every unemployed person should be offered a job (permanent or temporary) or training within a year of becoming unemployed.

Yours faithfully,
M. J. ARTIS
(Manchester University),
WILLIAM BROWN (Cambridge),
RICHARD LAYARD (LSE),
STEVE NICKELL (Oxford),
c/o Campaign for Work,
Annexe B, Tottenham Town Hall,
Tottenham, N15,
February 14.

Top pay awards

From the General Secretary of the Association of First Division Civil Servants

Sir, In your leading article of February 2, 1991, you refer to pay reviews such as those recently awarded to senior civil servants, judges, consultants, nurses, doctors and soldiers, as "always inflationary". Yet on October 22, 1990, also in a leading article, you said that these same arrangements had been "reasonably successful in holding down the pay of public employees".

The fact is that the mechanisms of pay review bodies are well tested, reliable and most importantly independent. They may also have the virtue on occasions of being consistent in their approach.

In October 1990 you said, "senior civil servants, whose cause is not popular, are paid too little". In February, now that a pay increase at about the current inflation (although well within the inflation of the last year) is awarded you write only of the "grotesque contrast" with government advocacy for private sector pay.

In October, you told the nation that "awards from review bodies... are for ever being rephased to keep down the cost to the exchequer". You went on, "the illusion of restraint is achieved, but only at a cost to the morale of those involved and to the integrity of ministerial conjurers. This is no way to run a railroad, or a post office, or a central government".

Yet in February you complain that the staging is a mere "excuse" for paying the full award at all, and you question whether the rises are the "best form of counter-cyclical pump-priming to boost the Treasury's own pay packet".

In October you said, "only the naive believe in a perfect policy for the public sector". Three short months later you appear to have embraced that naivety and thrown your own balanced judgment overboard.

In October you said, "ministers should keep negotiations at arms' length. Those who cannot keep their hands off invariably end up with burnt fingers". By February you suggest that ministers should have interfered even more to undermine the recommendations of the independent review bodies.

The nation may well wonder which to believe — the October judgment that senior civil servants are paid too little, or the February one that awards about the level of inflation "are an inflationary disgrace".

One is tempted to reflect that this is "no way to run a railroad, or a post office, or a central government" — or a national newspaper!

Yours sincerely,
ELIZABETH SYMONS,
General Secretary,
The Association of First Division Civil Servants,
2 Caxton Street, SW1,
February 5.

former respect then it should be limited to the areas which are purely local, and these should be funded entirely by a local tax — preferably the community charge — at half its present level.

Local and national government will be at each others' throats until their funding is entirely separated. The removal of education from local government would achieve this, and local councils could then concentrate on the condition of local roads and pavements, street lighting, parks, libraries, refuse removal... by direct or indirect services and we could have smaller local councils more in touch with their grass roots.

Thus the transfer of educational funding to central government offers three distinct advantages: the cutting of the level of the community charge by almost half, the raising of school standards through parental choice and pressure, and the ending of the increasing tension between local and national government because of their overlap both in functions and in monetary matters.

I have the honour to remain your obedient servant,
RHODES BOYSON,
House of Commons,
February 11.

Bishop's case in cathedral enquiry

From the Legal Secretary to the Bishop of Lincoln

Sir, Mr John Snell (February 9) complains of the "foolish handling" of the affairs of Lincoln Cathedral and regrets that the bishop "chose to chair his own formal visitation instead of appointing a fellow bishop or canon lawyer".

In January 1990 the bishop received a letter from the chapter clerk stating in general terms that the dean and residentiary canons had resolved to refer their difficulties to him as visitor of the cathedral. It later became clear to him that he could not act in a purely pastoral manner and in March 1990 he enquired whether he was being asked to conduct a formal visitation in accordance with the cathedral statutes with all that would entail.

The reply was in the affirmative and this correspondence is referred to in the admonition and award which Mr Snell mentions and which has been made public.

The statutes provide that the bishop may carry out a visitation of his own volition whenever he wishes and that he must hold a visitation if so requested by the dean and chapter. There is no provision in the statutes for him to conduct a visitation otherwise than in person though on this occasion the bishop appointed as one of the assessors assisting him his vicar-general, an ecclesiastical lawyer.

In being required to act quasi-judicially as visitor he was thereby prevented from fully exercising a pastoral role but it is not correct to say that he "disqualified himself".

Within the limitations imposed upon him by the request for a formal visitation the bishop has sought to deal pastorally so far as he has been able with the chapter. His willingness to continue to help them was confirmed at the conclusion of the visitation admonition and award.

Mr Snell asserts that the bishop's position is untenable because "we are no further forward". However, the bishop has no direct power over the affairs of the cathedral whether as visitor or otherwise. In the visitation his powers were limited to listening to what was said, announcing his findings and making recommendations.

The implementation of those recommendations and the general management of the cathedral's affairs are the responsibility of the dean and the residentiary canons and the bishop cannot be held accountable for any continuing difficulties within the chapter.

Yours faithfully,
DEREK M. WELLMAN,
Lincoln Diocesan Registry,
28 West Parade, Lincoln,
February 12.

Americans abroad

From Dr Angus Campbell

Sir, Bernard Levin ("If it's the Gulf it must be Mexico", February 4) was right about the US geographical perspective on "Yerp" (letters, February 8). During my first few months as a Fulbright scholar at Yale in 1958 I came gradually and painfully to realise that the UK was just a little dot on the far north-eastern corner of the map, and that everything that mattered happened in or revolved around New York and Washington.

At first our expatriate group defended ourselves by frequent informal meetings to denigrate most things American, but we soon adjusted to our status as interesting foreigners with "cute" accents, temporarily adopted the American-centric view of the world, and thoroughly enjoyed the generous hospitality of God's Own Country.

Yours faithfully,
ANGUS CAMPBELL,
Edenfield Centre, Prestwich Hospital,
Bury New Road, Prestwich,
Manchester 25,
February 11.

Dinner for three

From Mr Hugh Cockerell

Sir, Whatever Ho Chi Minh was doing at the Carlton Hotel on August 4, 1914, it is highly unlikely that he was preparing sprouts for the dinners of Winston Churchill and David Lloyd George as Mr Martin Gilbert (February 11) suggests. Brussels sprouts would certainly have been out of season.

Yours faithfully,
HUGH COCKERELL,
22 Mapesbury Road, NW2,
February 11.

Attack at No 10

From Mr F. J. Richard Piggott

Sir, Dr Carmen Blacker (February 13) interestingly links the cherry tree at No 10 and the legend that in Japan trees nobly give their lives to save the occupants of adjacent houses. The gingko tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) features prominently in the legend. Its fleshy leaves are purported to release sufficient moisture during a fire to enable the occupants of the neighbouring house to escape.

My great grandfather's house in Tokyo was thus saved from the fire following the great earthquake of 1923 and I and my family have for four generations always planted a gingko beside our homes. None of these homes has ever been razed by fire — but in truth none has ever been the subject of a mortar attack.

Yours faithfully,
F. J. R. PIGGOTT,
Army and Navy Club,
Pall Mall, SW1,
February 14.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071 782 5046).

A man, a brother and a mission

Bill Morris, once ambitious to be a shop floor supervisor, now says he will eventually become the general secretary of the TGWU.

Kate Muir met him in the first week of his election campaign

Bill Morris is a terrible disappointment. He has none of the characteristics that made trade union leaders a delight in the strike-torn Seventies. He is not wearing a bad brown suit. He lacks the impenetrable Scottish accent which allows the owner to shout "the wurrkers" with authority. He fails to refer to women as brothers. Worst of all, he does not smoke, and so is deprived of the badge of his trade, the Embassy tipped held constantly between thumb and forefinger as though it were a pool cue.

Just as John Major has made politics boring by quoting the *Guardian* and agreeing with the Opposition on cold weather payments, so Mr Morris, the deputy general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, is making trade unionism tedious by an unhealthy reliance on the word "consensus".

Here we have a man who is supposed to be on the dangerous left of the TGWU talking about how wonderful the Japanese are, and what a lot we have to learn from them. There seems to be no problem about the union song being replaced by the company one, so long as the union sings the backing track. Such are the realities of the Nineties, and Mr Morris, aged 52, believes he will be the general secretary who can cope with them. His more right-wing opponents in the election campaign, now in its first week, are George Wright, the Wales regional secretary, and Bob Harrison, the secretary of the food and drink section. Not surprisingly, they all want to improve pay, job security and quality of life. So how will the punters know Mr Morris is special?

"It's not what you say, it's what you do," he says, cryptically. Is he talking about some secret agenda? Is there a plot? Sadly, no. The days of trade unionism being more akin to a backroom poker game, with a touch of ballot-rigging, are gone. "The members will judge me on my record as deputy general secretary for the last five years. They are a very sophisticated electorate and will not be fooled."

The electorate is obviously making up its mind for what it has lost in quantity. In its heyday — 1978, to be precise — the TGWU had more than two million members. Now it has 1.3 million, although it is still the biggest union. The Trades Union Congress's membership is down from 12.1 million to 8.4 million, and its headquarters, Congress House, where Mr Morris is today, is echoing and empty. The building won a Royal Institute of British Architects award in 1958, and that sums up its deficiencies. It is a perfect setting for worrying about the future of the union movement, beneath the shadow of a concrete statue, the kind which has been remembered all over eastern

Europe, of a giant man holding a floppy dead person in his stone arms. Perhaps a dead worker.

Some traditions are still alive, in particular the native language, of which Mr Morris has a firm grasp. "We are very much on the learning curve as far as the new debate on pay bargaining is concerned, but at the end of the day, it is the opinion of the members that will matter." For those outside the union, these are not so much buzzwords as snooze-words. Fortunately, Mr Morris stops orating after a few minutes and starts talking about where we go from here.

We go, in fact, to Japan, which Mr Morris has visited twice. He viewed the Japanese economy and industry, and was impressed. "They have a national consensus to succeed, a pride in what they

'I don't want to be an autocratic leader. I shall not be spending time plotting in smoke-filled rooms'

do, and a community consensus within the company. Common objectives defuse conflict." He believes conflict still exists in Britain, although the worker-management divide is smaller than when he was a car worker in Birmingham in 1958.

There is still a class structure in Britain, despite the assertions by the prime minister. We may not mean the same by "working class", but there are still interests which reflect either labour or capital. What the Japanese have learnt is to sweat the capital instead of sweating the labour. They don't do things in the short term, they invest in training and technology and are not afraid of waiting for returns.

Here some companies are only interested in what they can get immediately, and keep up the divide by making certain people use a time clock, docking their pay if they go to the dentist, giving different maternity leave. Those should be basic human concerns, not dependent on salary.

But for a chance incident on the shop floor of the car components company Hardy Spicer, Mr Morris could have been on the management side. "I joined the union because everyone else did. I had no interest in being an activist. I had ambitions that if I kept my nose clean and did all the right things I might become a supervisor, but fate just wasn't going to take me in that direction."

Fate came in the form of protective gloves, which the machinists lacked. A deputisation was sent to the foreman's office, but the shop steward was ill, so the 23-year-old Mr Morris was pushed to the front to say something. He did it rather well, and a few weeks later the shop steward resigned, and Mr Morris took over.

That was quite an achievement in the Handsworth of the early Sixties, where the factory gates still had signs saying "No Blacks Here", and gangs of Teddy boys attacked Mr Morris and his friends. "I used to go into this particular shop, and the lady behind the counter would just disappear. It sold sweets, and I kept going, until one day someone told me it happened every time a black person went in."

In some ways that overt racism was easy to confront, but the prejudice in the union itself was harder to nail down. Usually the deputy general secretary is nominated for the Labour party national executive committee, but Mr Morris was not — perhaps because he was left-wing. For other positions, though, the tone was clear. "People would say, 'Bill, it's in your own interest, but we just don't think the union is ready for a black officer'. Or, 'We don't think you'd be suitable for that part of the country'. But all that didn't deflate my determination."

He hated when groups conspired against him, and in a union whose dockers marched in the "rivers of blood" era, there were plenty of them. "For me, racism is not just an evil. It is a social disease, because if you have a racist father, you then get racist children, because it is part of the culture of the home. Racism devalues the victim, but it also corrupts the perpetrator."

Now, out of diplomacy, he gives the TGWU a clean bill of health. "Any organisation which can deliver a black car worker from Birmingham as its deputy general secretary, and eventually general secretary," he says, pausing to smile, "has shown its maturity and commitment to equality."

The union, and its master Ron Todd, have been well served by Mr Morris. He computerised membership lists, encouraged members to think European, and started the glossy Link Up campaign to bring in more members, raising recruits from 220,000 a year to 285,000. But there is nothing he can do about the shrinking of the union's constituency, as service industries and home workers replace manufacturing industry, which has declined by 30 per cent in the last decade. His words "we are a nation of manufacturers, we have to make our way in the world by making things" ring hollow as Jaguar makes more than a thou-



Opening doors: Bill Morris still believes we have to make our way in the world by making things

sand workers redundant, and Britain plunges further into recession.

Recessions are never good times for unions, and this may increase the vote for the right when the ballot is counted on June 7. Mr Morris remains hopeful, although he is increasingly ministering to a dying membership. Even his election manifesto is titled "Mission Statement" in an evangelical sort of way, although he may be boldly going nowhere.

The electorate seems to like him personally. At Congress House, people keep coming up to shake his hand and in some cases kiss

him, an act they would probably not relish with Ron Todd. He will not be an old-style union boss if he wins. "I shall try to use the word 'I' as little as possible. I am representing the members, not myself. I don't want to be an autocratic leader. I shall not be spending time plotting in smoke-filled rooms."

Mr Morris is still slightly astonished that he has gone so far. It is an unlikely end for the son of a part-time farmer, part-time policeman from Jamaica. He says his wife, Minette, was instrumental in encouraging him. "We were childhood sweethearts. She was 17 and

a trainee nurse and I was 16. We married young, we had children, and we made a lot of mistakes together, but she supported me and I her. Life was good to us, we had the breaks, but a lot of it was down to hard work."

Last year, she died of cancer. "It is one year, one month and two days since it happened. Her birthday was on Sunday, so that was always going to be hard. I have thrown myself into my work, but I recognise work is no substitute for her, so when this little lot is over I am going to take some time off and plan how I am going to rebuild my life."

Uncertain climate of change

After 20 decimal years, nostalgia for 'real' money lingers

Dip into your pocket: if there is a 10p piece dated earlier than 1971 among your small change, you are in the running today for a bargain. Or if you have an old moneybox full of farthings and sixpences at the back of the bureau, you still have the chance to save 80p on the Isle of Portland, or £2.95 in the port of Weymouth. To celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the introduction of decimal coinage, the Portland Museum and the Tyme-walk museum in Weymouth are waiving decimal entry charges for visitors paying for their ticket today with any pre-decimal coin.

"I was hoping we might get the odd doubloon or piece of eight," says Harvey Bailey, the head of leisure and tourism for Portland and Weymouth council. "Hardly anyone seems to be marking the anniversary, and since it is a piece of social history, we thought we would do it in a way linked to our museums. It is shocking to think that it is 20 years ago already."

Since the old 5p piece was withdrawn last year, the former florin, whose face value is now 10p, has been the only coin in circulation which was minted at the same size and weight in pre-decimal form. When it, too, is withdrawn in 1992, the hope of coming out of the greengrocer's shop with an antique in one's change will finally be extinguished.

Overnight, decimalisation threw a patina of old-world quaintness over even the newest and harshest of modern books and films. Pounds, shillings and pence were dispatched to the same retrospective realm as angels, nobles and groats. It changed the language, in ways that reaffirmed the fine unreluctance of linguistic history. The powers that be had designed the change so that the populace should be confused as little as possible by new conceptions. The florin and the shilling (the "bob") were retained, and widely expected to retain their popular names. The new smaller coins bore the reassuringly familiar names of "penny" and "halfpenny".

Usage would have none of it. It saw the main need as the avoidance of confusion between new pennies and old, and threw up devices to secure this: the singular "pence", and the "pee" (a form which caused great initial anguish to the fastidious). Almost at once, it became ostentatiously archaic to refer to shillings, pennies, ha'pennies and tuppences. It is a mark of the scale of our cultural loss that none of our coins since 1971 has acquired a settled nickname, although witty people regularly try to launch them.

If you mean to visit the Portland Museum today, by the way, check the date of your pre-decimal penny before parting with it. If the date is 1933, it is worth more than a whole treasure-chest of doubloons and pieces of eight.

GEORGE HILL

Acts of self-defence

Is Dad's Army enough protection against terrorism?



Civil guard: David Harper

SOLID burghers such as 64-year-old David Harper would not normally be found in a "soddy" suit. His regular attire is pin-striped and his natural habitat is the City of London, where he runs a firm of loss adjusters. This evening, however, he will climb into a nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) protection suit, in front of 40 concerned people in a hall in Richmond, Surrey.

Mr Harper runs the local branch of Civil Aid, a voluntary agency with 1,000 members nationwide. Sound-ing like a relic from Dad's Army, Civil Aid tries to maintain the kind of local preparedness against attacks and emergencies which the Civil Defence Corps provided until it was disbanded in 1968.

In recent years its activities have been limited to a precautionary presence at open-air pop concerts. But now, after four weeks of the Gulf war and following an article about Civil Aid in the local press, Mr Harper has agreed to hold a three-week course, including advice on how to respond to a gas attack. He believes that, in spite of their exemplary sang-froid, Britons are starting to worry about terrorist attacks involving chemical or nuclear weapons. "Some residents are petrified," he says. "They've been asking for gas masks."

During the course Mr Harper aims to examine the Iraqi threat in Britain. He expects there could be a number of terrorist incidents in Britain, and will provide information on the range of weapons — from hand-guns and high explosives to chemical and biological agents — in use today. He will demonstrate not just "advance protection for the family" (from sealing windows to dealing with fires), but also protective clothing, ranging from nerve gas respirators to the full NBC suit. One further

topic is coyly mentioned in the prospectus, titled "Suppose I am out shopping if it happens". "It" being a nuclear attack. Mr Harper is sanguine: "Take cover, put a wet towel over your head, and pray."

So why isn't the government doing more to meet the apparent demand for this sort of training? The problem is that its official civil protection programme is in disarray. It is caught between three conflicting considerations: the end of the cold war, the growing need for civil emergency planning, and financial constraint, particularly in the light of the community charge.

According to current regulations, which are under review, local authorities have a statutory duty to prepare for war. They receive £27 million a year from the government to do so. In return for this largesse, they must be able, in the event of war, to take certain measures such as getting their emergency centres operational within 48 hours,

and getting ration documents issued within a week.

However, since thinking has moved in the direction of "all hazards" emergency planning, local authorities are also empowered (although not required) to prepare for peacetime disasters, ranging from extremes of weather to large-scale transport accidents. But they are given no specific funds for this. So emergency planning officers are often faced with the choice of either ignoring their legal obligation to prepare for war, or cannibalising civil defence grants to cater for potential peacetime disasters.

In the emergency operations centre (in popular parlance, nuclear bunker) under Hertford's county hall last week, David Moses, the county's chief emergency planning officer, was checking the communications network (telephones, telex, faxes and radios) which is the most visible sign of spending on civil defence. However, he admits his county "has not over fully developed its emergency centre to reach existing war-time criteria". The £100,000 second phase of the centre's construction has not been started because last November the government put a moratorium on capital spending on civil protection.

THE home secretary is due to publish his civil defence review in the summer. In the light of events in the Gulf, Mr Moses, who is also president of the Society of County Emergency Planning Officers, would not be disappointed if he took a little more time.

"Over the past year we've had this euphoria that peace has broken out," he says. "We now need to look at this area a little harder and longer."

ANDREW LYCETT

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Campaigning

Glenda Jackson in the March

TAILOR

GALLERIES

The importance of being Ernst

John Russell Taylor on the Tate Gallery's centenary celebration of the visionary German Surrealist

The trouble with most classic Surrealists is that they were Conceptual artists before the concept. They were ideas people, whose execution of their ideas in paint tended to be flatly mechanical. It was almost as if, once the moment of outrageous invention was past, anybody of moderate technical competence could put it on canvas. But there is one shining exception to this rule: Max Ernst, whose centenary is being celebrated with a grand retrospective at the Tate Gallery.

Even describing Ernst as a Surrealist requires qualification. He was certainly involved with the Surrealist movement in France in the Twenties and Thirties, and before that with the original Dada movement in Cologne. Many of his basic processes derive from a Surrealist fascination with the arbitrary and the accidental, automatic writing and the strange resonances of found objects. Much of his most compelling work was in the form of specially favoured by Surrealists: collage. His sense of the ridiculous was stimulated by Victorian engravings and the saccharine excesses of popular religion, and nobody knew better how to manipulate bits and pieces into hilarious new compositions. This means that the Ernst show is one of the few in recent memory at which the viewer may not only smile appreciatively, but laugh outright. Yet it would be radically undervaluing him to suppose that his work stops at the easy guffaw.

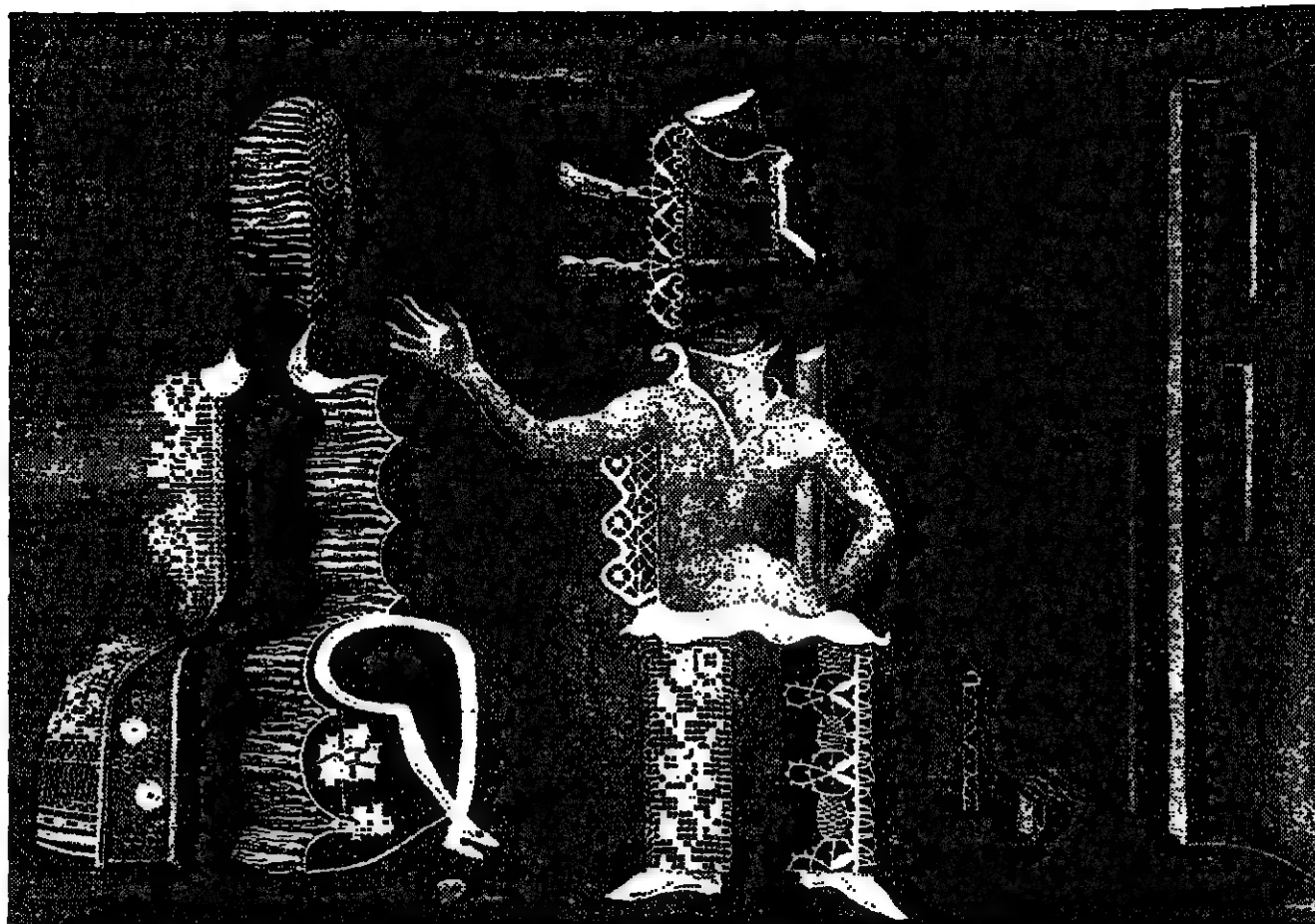
The collages he put together in such pictorial "novels" as "La Femme 100 têtes" and "Rêve d'une petite fille qui voit entrer au Carmel" are often funny — but also, as all good Surrealists should be, deeply disturbing. By giving himself over to, and pushing his audience into, free association, he constantly uncovers nightmares, turning a Romantic hero into a monster by the simple expedient of substituting a bird's head for the original, or allowing his fashionable maiden, unaccountably, to find supernumerary limbs poking out of her bodice.

But the peculiar force of these apparently

marginal fantasies comes from Ernst's amazing skill as a painter. He knows exactly how to match textures, proportions and perspectives so that, until they are closely examined, the finished collages work with the insidious conviction of a good forgery. If some Victorian engraver had suddenly taken leave of his senses, this is precisely what he might have produced. This conviction irradiates all of Ernst's painting and, for that matter, the considerable body of sculpture which was gathered together for last year's Edinburgh Festival and is here represented only sporadically. Ernst may superficially qualify as a Surrealist. But he is really something much rarer and more impressive: a true visionary.

Conveying those visions was the one consistent business of his extraordinarily varied life. Sometimes he seems to be in deliberate flight from any national or stylistic label. Though he began in Cologne working alongside such local Expressionists as August Macke, the earliest pictures on show here, which date from the first world war, do not look at all German (indeed, if they resemble anything, it is the contemporary work of Chagall). Soon afterwards, when Ernst was apparently part of the Dada movement, his pictures veered towards the Italianate: he was obviously aware of what de Chirico and Carrà were doing at this time, and recognised in its vocabulary that he could use for his own purposes.

Like Picasso, Ernst never stopped to worry about whether he was being consistent: a style or an idea took his fancy, and he appropriated it, sublimely (and correctly) certain that if he was doing it, and product would be unmistakably his. When he was German he did not look German; when French he did not look French. And when American, as he was between 1941 and 1953, he did not look American either. His style ranged wildly, depending on his mood and, partly, his surroundings. Always, however, it came from his world of dreams. His desert surroundings in Arizona in the Forties may well have inspired his science-fiction



Fine match of textures, proportions and perspectives: Max Ernst's 1923 oil, "The Couple", on show at the Tate Gallery

landscapes built of sand and coral. But elsewhere are similar ideas in paintings that he did years before he had ever set eyes on Escherich.

Here and there he hovers on the verge of kitsch, as in some of the "snow flower" and butterfly paintings of the early Thirties. After all, it would not be possible to parody kitsch so effectively if one did not have some sneaking regard for it to begin with. There is little sign that outside circumstances had much effect on Ernst, though it is probably not coincidental that one of his most frightening creations, the "Fireside Angel" of 1937, impends sinisterly over its landscape in a way that instantly recalls the contemporary reactions of Picasso and Dalí to the Spanish Civil War.

When, in paintings such as "Chemical Nuptials" and "Design in Nature" of 1948/49, he unpredictably reverts to the

Italian influences of his youth, the result is powerful and moving. But sometimes he seems to be harking back to abandoned styles and influences because he is merely vamping until ready. In this he was probably most like Picasso: he had to keep working.

Moreover, the strength of Ernst's vision is evident not only in the number of disparate influences he was able to absorb, but also in the number of disparate artists that he in turn influenced. Sometimes, no doubt, the influence has been indirect, Ernst filtered through advertising and the movies. But surely the film director David Lynch, when he created the opening sequences of *Blue Velvet*, must have been well aware of Ernst's extraordinary undergrowth pictures like "La joie de vivre". Ernst has the quality (unfortunately rare in those commemorated at length) of

leaving visitors to even the largest collection of his work wanting more. The show of Ernst which simultaneously opens Fischer Fine Art's beautified galleries contains work as good as any except the very greatest at the Tate. And it is noticeable how many of the exhibits come from private collections. If Ernst is not yet among the most expensive of modern masters, it is clearly only a matter of time and opportunity to buy. Neither of which need be any impediment to making the most of this chance: anybody who is not familiar with one of the greatest of modern masters should lose no time in becoming acquainted.

Max Ernst: A Retrospective Tate Gallery, Millbank, SW1 (071-821 7125). Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2pm-6pm, until Apr 21. Max Ernst 1891-1976 Fischer Fine Art, 30 King Street, SW1 (071-839 3942). Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sat 10am-1pm, until Mar 15.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

WRIT IN WATER: Edward Lear managed in the course of his career to paint in watercolour many of the most fascinating places in the eastern Mediterranean. Sir Steven Runciman has visited and studied most of them in his time, and his collection of Lear watercolours reflects the range of his interests as well as of Lear's talents.

Watercolours by Edward Lear National Gallery of Scotland, The Mound, Edinburgh (031-555 8821). Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2pm-6pm, until April 28.

ART OF LOVE: Venus and Cupid are the subject of a considerable amount of mythological art in Old Masters, major and minor. To celebrate St Valentine's Day, Wildenstein has collected a variety of pieces, from Fragonard to Goya and Hubert to Elson.

Venus and Cupid Wildenstein and Co, 147 New Bond Street, W1 (071-493 3924). Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, until March 28.

LIGHT IN THE WINDOW: After their triumphant tour of London, Paris and New York as part of the great Wright of Derby exhibition, 16 of Derby Art Gallery's pictures have returned permanently to their own gallery, newly refurbished while they were away. Their return is accompanied by a week of special events.

Welcome Home Joseph Wright City Museum and Art Gallery, The Strand, Derby (0332 255566). 11am-5pm, Tues-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2pm-5pm.

PRIZE WINNERS: This year the annual Hunting Group painting award is co-sponsored by The Observer, and the winner and runners-up are on show at the Matt Galleries. The winner, Barry Burman's "MANACLES", is a portrait inspired by medieval wall-paintings and icons; the second prizes go to Ashley Hanson and Justin Mortimer. As usual, well worth a look.

Hunting/Observer Exhibition Matt Galleries, The Mall, SW1 (071-833 8844). Daily 10am-5pm, until Feb 23.

MOONSTRUCK: Painting moonlit scenes has been an Italian tradition since the Renaissance — first as a talking background to religious subjects, then just for their own sake. This show proposes a new genre, and gets together a lot of wonderful works to prove its point.

Italy By Moonlight Accademia Italiana, 24 Rutland Gate SW7 (071-225 3474). Tues to Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2pm-3.30pm, until March 2.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

RECORDS: ROCK

Ricocheting ballads from Nineties hit-men

LIONISED by the cognoscenti, banned by the BBC and parodied by Brits impresario Jonathan King, Carter The Unstoppable Sex Machine offers a sturdy version of the punk credo updated for the Nineties. As the name suggests, Carter U.S.M. is on the lookout for any gratuitous controversy that is going. Singing about racist bigotry in the Coldstream Guards on the single "Bloodsport for All" is hardly going to endear the South London duo to radio programmers in the

current political climate. As songwriters the Carters combine "bane MacGowan's lyrical" with Joe Strummer's ... o-r-rock pose. The result on 30 Something is a grim litany of alcohol abuse, death on the battlefield, urban decay, wife battering and consumerist greed set against a backdrop of a pounding mechanised beat. Far more spirited and direct than any of the baggy brigade's music, it is a stunning evocation of post-adolescent angst that penetrates swiftly then ricochets

Carter The Unstoppable Sex Machine: 30 Something (Rough Trade R20112701) Mike Rodden: Cuckoo (Atlantic 9031-72770-2) Bob Marley & The Wailers: Talkin' Blues (Tuff Gong TGLCD 12)

angrily round the brain. Blue Rodeo's besetting lack of an image has not been alleviated by a stint playing the part of Meryl Streep's backing band in the film *Postcards from the Edge*, in which the five young musicians look disconcertingly

convincing as somebody else's hired hands.

Still, they are "big" in Canada, which is where they come from, and as a lovingly observed chunk of retro-rock in a Band/Byrds mould their third album, *Casino*, has its moments. The collection is characterised by the faintly out-of-tune harmonica, too-ling away on "What Am I Doing Here", the burst of psychedelic backwards guitar on "Time" and a lot of swelling organ and roosty, acoustic guitar throughout.

Like those Hovis television advertisements, the impression is of an elegant facsimile from a bygone era; a comforting sound, but hardly the genuine article.

Bob Marley's Talkin' Blues captures the sound of a true original. Recorded live in 1973 for an American radio broadcast, it incorporates two previously unreleased tracks and many favourites in a joyful and timely celebration of a sorely missed talent.

DAVID SINCLAIR

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Speaking up for dangerous liaison

Cynics will say it is just a matter of record companies cashing in on glitzy names, but there is a deadly thrust of recordings of music with a place for the spoken word. Virgin Classics offers Sir John Gielgud musings with Herman Melville in *The Encantadas* by Tobias Picker. For the same company, Delphine Seyrig hits the right notes of sophisticated weariness and sudden pleasure in reading the erotic Grecian verses of the Debussy-Louys *Chansons de Bilitis*. Meanwhile, on Deutsche Grammophon, Sting reads the story of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* and Marthe Keller and Georges Wilson lead the speaking cast in the Honegger-Claudel *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher*.

The urge to combine music and speech is an especially 20th-century phenomenon. There are predecessors, such as in *Zakhe* and *Fidelio*, but there the music is more punctuation than underlay, perhaps because Mozart and Beethoven realised that putting simultaneous music and speech together causes a difficulty. A singing voice brings words into the ambit of music; a speaking voice declares its separateness.

Perhaps this is essentially because we comprehend speech in clumps, in words and groups of words. In whatever way we comprehend music, it is certainly not always in such a seemingly formalised and discontinuous way. Also, the sounds of words are not particularly important in everyday speech. Indeed, as soon as we recognise a sound as a word, it stops being a sound.

If music and speech are in all these ways alien, that only makes their combination an obvious goal for 20th-century modernism. So it is not surprising that both Schoenberg and Stravinsky should have attempted to overcome the divide: Stravinsky in *The Soldier's Tale* and *Perséphone*,

Schoenberg in *Pierrot lunaire*. Nor is it surprising that their efforts should have been radically different. *The Soldier's Tale* keeps the two elements largely separate, in a balance of frictions, whereas Schoenberg's invention of *Sprechgesang* clamps them together in a dangerous, untoward unity: the work's anxieties and ironies spring partly from this uncertainty about whether the soloist is speaking or singing. In both cases, the embarrassment of speech in music becomes essential, in the way that the parallel embarrassment of written words appearing in a painting becomes essential in certain Picassos and Magrittes.

Debussy's *Chansons de Bilitis* music was written for a recitation, just as his *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* was intended to precede a reading of Mallarmé's poem. The music stays largely separate, flowing between the verses as interludes, but this is genuinely a work of speech and music: the musical gestures are sparked off by the rhythms and imagery of the poems. The Virgin record (VC 7 91148-2) provides a beautiful performance by Seyrig and members of the Nash Ensemble, who usefully place the work in the context of Debussy's late sonatas and another Hellenistic fantasy, the solo flute piece, *Syrinx*.

Honegger's *Jeanne d'Arc* (DG 429 412-2) has the quality of a film without pictures, reminding one that the art of melodrama reached its apogee in the films of this period, the 1930s, though usually at the expense of placing the music in the background. So it is, here, in those passages where the dialogue is spoken, though the music weaves also through sung set pieces with an orchestra including the spectacular electronic ondes marteaux. Scipio Ozerova conducts a celebratory performance with Radio France forces.

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DONALD COOPER

THEATRE

The Visit

THIS brings to the National the wandering mummies who, though English-speaking, quaintly call themselves the Théâtre de Complicité and are noted for a physical chutzpah rarely associated with performers this side of the Channel. Their choice of play may, then, surprise those who remember the sober, even sombre production *The Visit* received from the Lunts performed in the late 1950s. Yet Friedrich Dürrenmatt, its author, called it a comedy and said that "they're seriousness" was above all to be avoided by its actors. Complicité has certainly heeded his words.

The reason critics are apt to wax solemn about the piece is that they see it as that deadly thing, a key work of the post-war era. The zillionaire Clara Zachanassian returns to the town she left in disgrace a decade ago, bent on exacting retribution on the man who seduced her. If the citizens kill Alfred Schill, she will give them what the original play called "a million" but, thanks to inflation, Annabel Arden's revival ups to a "billion". Whether this means pounds, marks, or francs is not clear. For the people of Guelien, deep in depression, it is enough.

Gradually, a play about revenge becomes one about moral compromise. At first the indignant Guelienites remember that Goe the stayed in their town and Brahms wrote a quartet there. They talk importantly of Europe's culture and humane traditions.

adding (more updating here) that "this isn't the Middle East". But then they start buying new shoes, expensive brandy, minks, cars, and all on credit. There is only one way of meeting the bills. By the end the citizens, without meaning to, have consented to murder and called it justice.

Dürrenmatt's play has its realistic moments, and Arden's production respects the more important. In particular, Simon McBurney plays Schill as a perfectly unremarkable fellow, an affable weakling whose ingratiating laughter turns to panic and finally to a dull if dignified stoicism as he realises escape is impossible. But Dürrenmatt does also deal in caricature, never more so than when Clara appears, walking on mechanical legs and attended by blind eunuchs.

This is where Complicité comes triumphantly into its own. Clara compares herself to a "poison mushroom" and, as Kathryn Hunter plays her, she is that and much more. A gasp of red, presumably her lips, crosses her fungoid features, and black furts and green-and-purple silks swirl the parts beneath. She walks in jerks, like some tiny, malevolent stick insect. When she laughs, it is hard to know if she is coughing, whimpering, or creaking.

From the start, the physical invention is similarly impressive. The Guelienites mope round the railway station in dowdy, splattered clothes, looking as if gruel is something they swim in as well as subsist on. Then they reel back as an express screeches by, flinging rubbish across the platform and dust into their eyes: a reaction so detailed that the audience spontaneously applauded. So the evening



Carried by the blind: Kathryn Hunter as Clara Zachanassian

continues, with a spoof ballet here, a comically stylised support there, and a slow, sinister death to end it all. Meanwhile, the actors skilfully change costumes, roles and even species, at one point doubling as trees in the local forest.

The decor is rough, mostly decaying walls, a tattered curtain, a jumble of old tables and chairs; and the production's sum effect, despite the odd tricky moment, is

equally blunt, immediate and to-the-point. Clara has been interpreted as Hitler, the Marshall Plan, the German economic miracle. But all such comparisons are too specific. She is what asks us, here, to sell our consciences for security and our souls for wealth: contemporary temptation, raised to memorably gaudy extremes.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

THEATRE

The Winter Wife

Nuffield, Southampton

IS IT bad for the box office to call a play elegant as well as sturdy? I hope not, because both those terms properly belong to Claire Tomalin's first play, dramatizing the events in one of the last winters in the life of a famous young woman.

The Winter Wife is set in a villa in the South of France in 1920-21. "About Jayne Mansfield, is it?" asked the lady behind me of her neighbour. Well, half right, but in fact Katherine, the finest short story writer of her day. Unlike

Galsworthy, so fervently admired by her companion, Ida Baker, for "putting everything in", Mansfield had a perception of character and event so acute that she could leave out what most writers stuff in and could thereby isolate the fluttering essence of a life.

Though married to the odiously stingy Middleton Murry in these last years of her life, Mansfield is not the wife of the title. This is the devoted Ida, whom she called "Jones" or even "Joney", sometimes affectionately but as often with a spiteful intention to wound. Without Ida's fond fussing she would have died of her TB and from what Murry daintily veiled as "a rheumatic fever", several years earlier. One of Tomalin's achievements is to

have brought honour to this nervous yet determined friend, who was to outlive her idol by nearly 60 years.

In the open rooms of the Villa Isola Bella, set in Tanya McCallin's excellent design, against a tiled square of Mause-blue sea, the difficult relationship between the two women is caught with a precision that recalls Mansfield's own lucid style. Rachel Joyce's Mansfield is a frail, injured lioness or perhaps a more graceful animal, a lynx or cheetah, born for speed but obliged to limp. Her penitence, the explosion of impatient rage, identify the short fuse of the frighteningly ill. It is a compelling study of feverish genius forced to admit dependence upon someone who will never

pronounce Avignon correctly. Beautifully counter-balancing this performance is Gabrielle Lloyd's Ida, chirruping little bursts of excitement as she opens a sun-shade, popping grapes, biscuits, or a crystalline plum into her mouth as she tries to break the ice. She is, she is, she is. Blended into the story is the attentive cook, Marie (Pamela Roddick), and the skilfully created Dr Bouchard, played by grave tenderness by Michael Irwin. Patrick Sandford's sensitive production of this accomplished and, yes, elegant play comes to the Lyric, Hammer-smith, in March.

JEREMY KINGSTON

OPERA

La fanciulla del West

La Scala, Milan

PUCCINI rarely moved further away from *verismo* than he did in *La fanciulla del West*: the Wild West was for him almost as mythical a location as the ancient China of *Turandot*, and therefore seemed a suitable setting for his homely attempt at the Wagnerian salvation-through-woman theme (an interesting inversion of his usual topic, perdition-through-love).

But Jonathan Miller, producing at La Scala for the first time, has supplanted the stereotypes envisaged by the composer with more realistic images: the traditional gallery of colourful characters in a picturesque saloon bar becomes a grey squad of weary men in a bleak warehouse where they hang about after work. The great Californian forest has been chopped down, and in its place Stefania Lazaridis has erected a grimy minehead, with all its unromantic trappings.

Puccini would be appalled, but he might also be surprised at how clearly his intentions survive. Having darkened the lives of the other characters, Miller whitewashes the heroine and the widened gap between the prim, freshly-laundried Minnie and the



Restrained: Plácido Domingo

miserable crowd she holds in the palm of her hand accentuates her unreality — she is not so much a character as a symbol of her hope of redemption. If anything, the opera appears less inept than usual, and the miners' nostalgia more poignant.

Mara Zampieri throws herself into the title role with plenty of passion and a strident, unpredictable voice. Plácido Domingo is at times rather too restrained as the noble bandit, but rises magnificently to all the big moments, his breadth of phrase and generosity of emotion as exceptional as ever. Loris Mazzoli and the orchestra revel in the score's sentiment and positively indulge themselves in its savagery.

NIGEL JAMIESON

CONCERT

ECO/Davis

Barbican Hall

ONLY two concerts in the entire schedule of the English Chamber Orchestra's Mozart 200 series feature the conducting of Sir Colin Davis. One is due to happen this October; the other, devoted to music composed in 1773-4, took place last night. That no more will be seen of him is a pity, for he has always been a marvellous Mozartian, and gets better as he gets older. Here his floating rhythms and his refusal to allow a single moment to pass by as an irrelevant infected the ECO with a keenness and concentration often absent in their recent work.

Probably the toughest of the four pieces for this encouragingly large audience was the Concerto in C for two violins and orchestra, K.190, which also includes significant solo parts for oboe (Neil Black) and cello (Oleg Hegedus). Though it was also adorned with the levelling effect of a harpsichord continuo, the concerto was slightly spoiled by an incongruous style of solo violin playing. Stephanie Gooley and, especially, José-Luis García pushed their tone too hard, while their phrasing lacked the light and shade essen-

tial for the spacious musical style. Symphony No 26 in E flat major, K.184, is far more compact a work, cast in the Italianate form, derived from the opera overture, of three brief, connected movements. Fast-flowing, it has a formidable profusion of ideas, pregnant with developmental possibilities, teams from the adolescent Mozart's head. Meticulous articulation was coupled here with vital spontaneity.

After such a piece, the eight movements, including three Minuets, of the Serenade in D, K.203, might have seemed a dauntingly formal prospect, but Sir Colin had other ideas. His climax was the long Andante, the sixth movement, in which Black's beautifully shaped solo oboe again took centre stage, showing just the right degree of fragility. As if to pay him a compliment for his delicate *pianissimo*, the horns were touched in near the end with a wondrous gentleness, before the movement trailed off in its disarmingly modest way.

That was typical of Davis's care in balancing the texture, and it worked equally to the music's advantage in Joan Rodgers's singing of the motet *Exultate, jubilate*, which displayed a wonderfully agile voice and a sensitive insight into drama and style.

STEPHEN PETTIT

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 22

SLEECH
(b) Silly mad, a mind flat, adjective sleazy, orig. obs.: "is the senile flat marshes by degrees, the ideas brought to the mind with them, which we call sleech."

HALICORE
(a) Name of the genus of Sirenia, found in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, to which the dugong belongs, from the Greek *hals* the sea + *koros* a resident, literally in Greek a sea-nomad or migrant: "The dugong, typical of the genus Halicore, is a living form, ordinarily from ten to twelve feet long."

CUMSHAW
(a) A gift or tip, pidgin-English from the Chinese *kam-shaw* grateful thanks, said by beggars: "Beggars had the exceeding coolness to ask for a cumshaw as they left."

SKIPPET
(b) A flat box for protecting a seal, as of a document, orig. obs.: "The seals of the different parties being preserved in silver skippets attached to the volumes by silken cords."

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent



This position is from the game Chandler — Oateson. Foreign & Colonial Chess Premier 1950/51. White to play and win. Solution tomorrow.

Solution to yesterday's position: 1 Nxc6 Qxc6 2 Qxc6 3 Qxc6 4 Rxc6 5 Rxc6 6 Rxc6 7 Rxc6 8 Rxc6 9 Rxc6 10 Rxc6 11 Rxc6 12 Rxc6 13 Rxc6 14 Rxc6 15 Rxc6 16 Rxc6 17 Rxc6 18 Rxc6 19 Rxc6 20 Rxc6 21 Rxc6 22 Rxc6 23 Rxc6 24 Rxc6 25 Rxc6 26 Rxc6 27 Rxc6 28 Rxc6 29 Rxc6 30 Rxc6 31 Rxc6 32 Rxc6 33 Rxc6 34 Rxc6 35 Rxc6 36 Rxc6 37 Rxc6 38 Rxc6 39 Rxc6 40 Rxc6 41 Rxc6 42 Rxc6 43 Rxc6 44 Rxc6 45 Rxc6 46 Rxc6 47 Rxc6 48 Rxc6 49 Rxc6 50 Rxc6 51 Rxc6 52 Rxc6 53 Rxc6 54 Rxc6 55 Rxc6 56 Rxc6 57 Rxc6 58 Rxc6 59 Rxc6 60 Rxc6 61 Rxc6 62 Rxc6 63 Rxc6 64 Rxc6 65 Rxc6 66 Rxc6 67 Rxc6 68 Rxc6 69 Rxc6 70 Rxc6 71 Rxc6 72 Rxc6 73 Rxc6 74 Rxc6 75 Rxc6 76 Rxc6 77 Rxc6 78 Rxc6 79 Rxc6 80 Rxc6 81 Rxc6 82 Rxc6 83 Rxc6 84 Rxc6 85 Rxc6 86 Rxc6 87 Rxc6 88 Rxc6 89 Rxc6 90 Rxc6 91 Rxc6 92 Rxc6 93 Rxc6 94 Rxc6 95 Rxc6 96 Rxc6 97 Rxc6 98 Rxc6 99 Rxc6 100 Rxc6 101 Rxc6 102 Rxc6 103 Rxc6 104 Rxc6 105 Rxc6 106 Rxc6 107 Rxc6 108 Rxc6 109 Rxc6 110 Rxc6 111 Rxc6 112 Rxc6 113 Rxc6 114 Rxc6 115 Rxc6 116 Rxc6 117 Rxc6 118 Rxc6 119 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Rxc6 1007 Rxc6 1008 Rxc6 1009 Rxc6 1010 Rxc6 1011 Rxc6 1012 Rxc6 1013 Rxc6 1014 Rxc6 1015 Rxc6 1016 Rxc6 1017 Rxc6 1018 Rxc6 1019 Rxc6 1020 Rxc6 1021 Rxc6 1022 Rxc6 1023 Rxc6 1024 Rxc6 1025 Rxc6 1026 Rxc6 1027 Rxc6 1028 Rxc6 1029 Rxc6 1030 Rxc6 1031 Rxc6 1032 Rxc6 1033 Rxc6 1034 Rxc6 1035 Rxc6 1036 Rxc6 1037 Rxc6 1038 Rxc6 1039 Rxc6 1040 Rxc6 1041 Rxc6 1042 Rxc6 1043 Rxc6 1044 Rxc6 1045 Rxc6 1046 Rxc6 1047 Rxc6 1048 Rxc6 1049 Rxc6 1050 Rxc6 1051 Rxc6 1052 Rxc6 1053 Rxc6 1054 Rxc6 1055 Rxc6 1056 Rxc6 1057 Rxc6 1058 Rxc6 1059 Rxc6 1060 Rxc6 1061 Rxc6 1062 Rxc6 1063 Rxc6 1064 Rxc6 1065 Rxc6 1066 Rxc6 1067 Rxc6 1068 Rxc6 1069 Rxc6 1070 Rxc6 1071 Rxc6 1072 Rxc6 1073 Rxc6 1074 Rxc6 1075 Rxc6 1076 Rxc6 1077 Rxc6 1078 Rxc6 1079 Rxc6

REC-2

6.45 Open University Measuring the Earth and the Moon Ends at 7.10
8.00 News 8.15 Westminster
9.00 **Daytime On Two:** Maths for adults 9.10 Management in education
9.40 History The Hydrant clearances 10.00 Learning to read
10.20 A visit to the Glasgow Garden Festival 10.40 Schooldrums
compose tunes based on the D major chord 11.00 We were hums
living at the time of dinosaurs? 11.15 Computer studies 11.30
CG German 11.45 Care and conservation - ruben 12.00 How
to survive in a wilderness - some other 12.20 Teenagers have a
taste of fame 12.50 Classic hits Charlotte Brontë's *Wuthering*
Heights 1.20 The Brontës 1.40 The first of five short plays
designed to encourage discussion in the classroom
2.00 News and weather followed by Words and Pictures (r)
2.15 **SPORT On Friday** introduced by Helen Roobson Buses: the world's
oldest championship from the Guild Hall, Preston, Rugby Union:
improvements of tomorrow's Calcutta Cup match between England and
Scotland at Twickenham and the game in Cardiff between Wales
and Scotland. Football: The British Broadcasting on the ground of the FA
Cup. With news and weather 3.00 and 3.50, Wales Snooker
4.00 Catchword. The word quiz hosted by Paul Coe
4.30 **Friday Passions.** Margaret Vaughan's crusade to convert the
British palate to the delights of wild wine (r) 4.50
5.00 **Flood Alley** (r) (Coastal)
5.00 Food And Drink (r)
6.00 **Film: The Hideaways** (1973) Claude (Sally Parker), a 12-year-old,
is sent to live with her mother's younger brother (Johnny Dornan).
Having nowhere to sleep she is forced to spend several nights in
the Metropolitan Museum of Art where they become fascinated
with one of the exhibits - a marble statue of an angel - and
beyond the rich recluse (Ingrid Bergman) who donated it. Mildling
children's fantasy, directed by Felcio Coe. Wales A With
Numbers 6.25 A Voce In 6.50 España Viva 7.15 Wales in
Wales
7.45 **What The Papers Say** with Jane Thyne of the *Daily Telegraph*
8.00 **Public Eye** presented by Peter Taylor
8.30 **Gardeners' World** A new series begins with Geoff Hamilton
showing how to get the best from high performance annuals in
containers, bushes and trees, and gardening with Alan Price
about the launch of a new magazine for gardeners with Dr
Stefan Szczepanski and Professor Greenwood



A passing call from a British inspector: Ian Oulvy (8.10pm)

● **00** **Lazurus and Dingwally.** Undernourished comedy series about two hapless policemen (Mark Ardern and Stephen Smith) working for the Bristly Senous Crime Squad. Billionaire tycoon "Patty Fry" has been kidnapped, but Lazurus and Dingwally are on the case. (CeeFax)

● **9.30** **Arena: Otomov.**
● **CHOICE.** Now that President Gorbachov no longer seems quite the liberal that we once thought him to be, Paul Lee's modern version of the Gorchovor classic may have less force than on its first transmission a year ago. But the idea of updating Otomov to reflect the current forces of literary cynicism and stagnation that perestroika was meant to combat is still a valid one. As many will remember from Spike Mitel's stage spoof, Otomov is the story of a man who stays in bed as long as possible, emerging only to consume vast meals. In Lee's version the erstwhile aristocrat has been turned into a Soviet bureaucrat, reporting that the Brezhnev line could not go on for ever. He is splendidly played by George Wendt, the heavyweight American actor of *Cheers*, with our own Ronald Fraser as his foul-tempered servant, originally a serif but now a cheffeur. The film was shot in the Soviet Union.

● **1.30** **Newspaper.** The story of Snowy 11.16. (Wesley)

● **2.00** **Flint: Gambit (1988).** Part one of a three-part thriller made for German television and set in Germany and Morocco, starring Desha Pajonov, Rolf Zacher and Heinz Bennent. A German scientist aids a Moroccan brother and his suitcase is found by a crook. Meanwhile, in Bonn the government receives a message from a terrorist organisation, threatening to blow up a nuclear power station unless their demand for one million marks is met. Investigative journalist Bille Seeger smears a rat and a big story, but is picked up by the security police before she can follow it up. Directed by Peter Krinninger, in German with English subtitles. (Part 2 next Friday) Ends at 1.05am Wales; Sprooker 12.00.

SATELLITE

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

1977-78 The Pictures
10.00 *Steen Doozen* (1987) Futuristic action
 film in which a cat (one) (Penny) (1987)
11.25 *The Running Man* (1987) Arnold
 Schwarzenegger plays in escapee convict
 who is forced to take part in a
 violent game show
1.00pm *Wherever You Are* (1986) Foster
 plays a man who is forced to leave his
 children's school for his new
3.00 *And the Winner Is...* (1988) A
 comedy film about a man who is
 forced to take part in a
 violent game show
4.25 *Peterson* (1987) A young
 man who is forced to take part in a
 violent game show
5.00 *Staying Alive* (1987) A young
 man who is forced to take part in a
 violent game show

EUROSPOT
 All the live Asira sessions.
1.00pm *International Dance Party* 6.30
2.00pm *International Dance Party* 6.30
3.00pm *International Dance Party* 6.30
4.00pm *International Dance Party* 6.30
5.00pm *International Dance Party* 6.30
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RADIO 4

2.00 Soundings (r)
3.00 Youth Orchestras of the '50s
Penderecki (Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima);
Stokowski (Symphony No. 3)
Prokofiev (Suite on Myung-Wu Whan Zicheng)
4.20 Christian Zacharias: The
Piano Plays C minor, W. 54;
Schubert (Sonata in E flat, D. 568) (r)
5.00 Sonnets for Pleasure, with Fiona
Tallington
6.30 The Honky-Tonk Man: Francis
Willard-Sims's first solo pianist
looks at the work of Charlie
Spand
7.00
7.05 Third Ear Professor Martin
Kemp talks to Kate Whitford,
whose paintings are being
shown at St Andrew's
Festival
7.30 BBC SO: Sixtieth Anniversary
Season: Gunter Wand
conducts Mozart Symphony
No. 41 E flat K 543, Flute
Concerto in G, K 431
8.30 Malcolm Hayes presents
extracts from Mozart's letters,
which bear the date of the
Prague Symphony (r) 8.50
Mozart (Symphony No 41 in G
minor, K 550)
9.30 Holocaust Remembers:
Shortly before his death in
November last year, Harig
talked to John Drummond
about the 40 years he spent
in the music business and in
the later part of his life, his
management of some of the
world's great artists
10.25
Living Memories
Günther introduces a
programme of recordings by
artists associated with Howard
Harig at North German radio
from 1945 to 1960
(Sonata in F sharp, Op 78;
James Goo, piano); Wagner
(Höre mi Sam, Götter;
Günther, Barbara; Festival
Orchestra under Karl Böhm,
with Maria Moll, mezzo);
Strauss (Metamorphosen;
BBC SO, Sirpa Kallio, piano)
11.15 John Bull: The harpsichordist
Jos van Immerseel plays three
in F minor
11.30
11.35-12.35am Composers of the
week. Lutoskiwsky
(Sonatas Nos 1 and 3) (r)
1.00-2.25 Night School (Fm only)
(except in Scotland)

[illegible]

suggestions for the Chinese New Year and report on a new scheme in London to help disaffected teenagers to gain their independence

10.30am *China's Secret: The Forsythe Chronicles* Episode 20 (a 23-part adaptation of John Galsworthy's saga, narrated by Sir Roger Moore)

11am *Fortune: Black Sheep* The first of a series of programmes examining working-class family life in the north through three generations

11.30am *Fortune: The Smiths* talks to housing estate teenagers who have been in trouble

12.00pm *Kate Winslet's Summer* reviews of the Max Ernst exhibition of surrealists' paintings at the Tate Gallery and Christopher Smith's new play *White Christmas*, at the National Theatre; and the Birmingham string quartet

12.30pm *Horror Stories* play live in the studio

1pm *5.50 Shopping Forecast* 5.55 weather

1.30pm *O'Clock News, Financial*

2pm *Going Places*. The travel and transport magazine

2.30pm *News 7 05* The Archers

3pm *At the Movies* *Amity O'Quinn?* Jonathan Demme is joned in Jersey by the journalist and producer of *Top Gun*, Jack Donnery, national officer of the Transport and General Workers' Union; the novelist Harry Patterson; and Charles Crichton, deputy editor of the *Daily Telegraph*

3.15pm *Law in Action*, Bernard Maclean talks a weekly look at the work of the Home Office

3.30pm *Kate Winslet's Summer* Seling the Words. The art of writing comedy (1)

4pm *News 7 10* *From America by Alastair Cooke* 9.50 weather

4.30pm *The World Tonight*

5pm *5.50* *Back to Backtime* Carol, by the singer (10.12)

5.30pm *Week Ending* A satirical review of the week's news

6pm *The Financial week*

6.30pm *News 7 15*

6.55pm *12.30am* news (and 12.20)

7.00am *12.30 Shopping*

7.15am-7.55pm *Radio 4* 7.55-8.30 *Radio 2* 8.30-9.00 *Radio 6* 9.00-9.15 *Radio 5* 9.15-9.30 *Capital* 9.30-10.00 *Radio 1* 10.0-10.30

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KID MOVIES

10am *The 400 Blows*
10am *Phenomena* in Vienna (1968) The
phenomena between two girls is President
Cassidy's daughter and her brother. Aus-
trian. *The Mark of Zorro* (1940, b/w)
Ironie Power stars as the masked cavalier.
1000pm *Lipstick* Saturday Night (1974)
Carpenter, John Travolta and Barbra Streis-
sandra, on a relaxing holiday and becoming
involved with gangsters.
1000 *Scooby-Doo and the Ruler of the
Night* Alibi (1989) A mystery writer (Tom
Sawyer) falls for a murder suspect (Patricia
Arquette).
1000 *Entertainment Tonight*
1000 (1985) *Penelope* Delany and
Joy Grass play middle class students at the
university-dominated FBI training academy.

SCREENSPORT

Use the Astro satellite.

00:00am Spanish Football Highlights 7.30 Ice
Hockey World Cup Qualifier 8.30 The
Hockey World Cup Qualifier 10.00
Sport-USA Wrestling The Main Event
21.00 Ice Hockey NHL 1991 1.00pm US
PGA Golf 3.00pm Americas: Walla/Melbourne
Investment 5.00p Stock-Aud and Market
6.00p NBA Basketball: Utah/Gold 9.00 US
Pro Boxing 10.30 Ice Hockey NHL 1991
12.30am Ice Hockey Individual World Cup
1.00am Ice Hockey Individual World Cup
2.00am Figure Skating Championships 5.30
Judo 6.30 Spanish Football

MTV

Use the Astro satellite.

22.40-24.00 hours of rock and pop

LIFESTYLE

Use the Astro satellite.

00.00am Great American Gameshow

MICHAEL PFEIFFER

A black and white portrait of Michael Pfeiffer, a man with dark hair and a mustache, looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt. The background is dark and out of focus.

LE FER

RADIO 1
Night in the Afternoon 5.30 News 91 6.00
The Tenth Muse 6.30 The Frisky Rock Show with
Paul Train
RADIO 2
The Humffrags 4.00 Don Maclean 5.05 John
C. 20 7.10 The Crestal 8.00 The Myster
BBC Concert Orchestra under Robin Ste
Programme Live from Manchester Hur
winner and meets Barbara Whigley and
at the Boston Octagon 12.05am Jazz
RADIO 5
10.00 12.00 News Sports 12.30pm
1.05 As 3.00 3.20 Sports 2.05 1.2.3.
London Scene 3.00 3.20 Sports 2.05 Outlo
Magazine 6.35 Face Aside 7.20 Revenge of
The Myster Investigates! The Mystery of Hy

Sterns and *W.M. 5.00am* Gary King 6.30
 Sterns Navyo 9.00 Steve Martin 12.30pm
 Sterns 12.30pm *W.M. 1.00pm* Gary King
 Time 7.30 The 2.00am Andy Peebles
 with Yvonne 12.00-2.00am Andy Peebles

Sterns 4.00am Steve Martin 6.00 Kan
 be 7.30 Derek James 9.30 Kate Boyle
 30 Jimmy Young 1.05pm David Jacobs 2.00
 in 9.30 Journey into Space The Real Planet
 12.30pm *W.M. 1.00pm* Gary King
 2 12.30pm Listen to the Band 10.00 The 2
 Deaves take to A.S. By the 1980 Booker
 reading who are appearing in Waiting for
 the 12.35-4.00 Andrew Lane with Negrité Fare

World World Service: Newspeak 6.30
 Evening Edition 9.00-10.00 10.25 1 2 3 4 5
 toddlers 10.40 The Family Business, and
 the Coates & Coates Spain (1 2 1 1.00
 at 10.25-10.40) 2.30 World Service
 Focus on 4.00 4.00 Sport 4.05 Cambridge
 Medical Read by John Leslie (first episode)
 its Another case for private investigator Ed

JOHN
le CAL
THE RING



PRÉS
SSIA

WORLD SERVICE

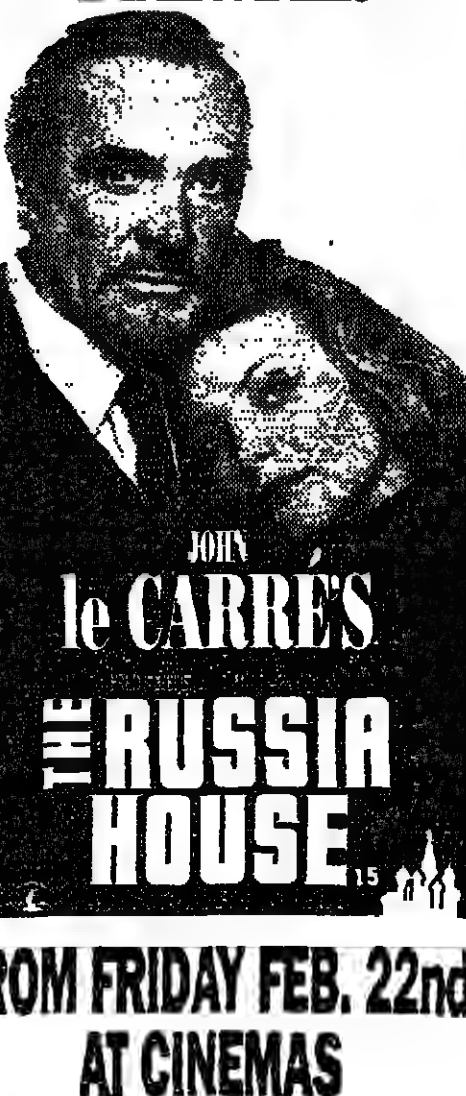
Weather and Travel News 6.00 Newsweek 6.15
 7.15 24 hr Britain 8.00 World News 8.05
 8.15 16 Sat in Britain 9.30 Financial News
 10.00 10.15 Focus on Farm 10.30 The
 Magazine 11.59 Travel News 12.00 World
 15.5 Sports Roundup 1.00 World News 1.15
 The Show 1.40 News 2.45 Backing the
 Charts Review 3.00 Money News 4.15 BBC
 4.15 4.30 5.00 Lunches Show 6.14 News
 6.20 7.00 Germany Features News 8.30
 8.40 World of Sport 9.30 Science in Action
 10.00 The Roundup 10.00 Newsweek 11.00
 11.30 11.45 12.00 Newsweek 12.30 Farm
 1.15 1.30 Outlook 1.40 Financial News 1.45
 1.50 2.00 2.15 2.30 2.45 2.55 3.00 3.15
 3.30 3.45 4.00 4.15 4.30 4.45 4.55 4.59
 5.00 5.15 5.30 5.45 5.59 6.00 6.15 6.30 6.45 6.59 7.00

COMPILED BY PETER DEAR AND
 CHOICE PETER WAYMARK/RAL

[illegible]

**FROM FRIDAY
AT CIN
ACROSS THE**

SE 15
FEB. 22nd
MAS
COUNTRY



MICHELLE
 PFEIFFER
 JOHN
 le CARRÉ
 THE RUSSIA
 HOUSE
 FROM FRIDAY FEB. 22nd
 AT CINEMAS
 ACROSS THE COUNTRY

BUSINESS AND FINANCE 23-30
LAW 31
MOTORING 32
YOUR OWN BUSINESS 34
SPORT 41-44

BUSINESS

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 15 1991

Business Editor
John Bell

Pound's rally clipped

BETTER than expected labour market data enabled the pound to stage a modest rally after it opened on a firm note following Wednesday's half-point cut in base rates.

But sterling's advance was short-lived and it slipped back as dealers started to look ahead to today's retail price index, expected to show annual inflation decelerating to about 9 per cent in January.

Still at the bottom of the European exchange-rate mechanism, the pound closed virtually unchanged against the Swiss franc at DM2.9044 and fell more than a cent to \$1.9803.

Hopes of further interest rate cuts in the weeks ahead brought institutional investors back into the stock market. The FT-SE 100 index surged 40 points early on but closed up 26.6 at 2,294.4, as more than 700 million shares changed hands.

Markets, page 28

Currency hurts BOC profits

BOC Group says adverse currency movements had a significant impact in the three months ended December. BOC had an operating profit of £89.4 million, against £97.3 million, and pre-tax profits of £71.4 million (£81.5 million).

Temps, page 25

Builder falls

Crest Nicholson, the property development, construction and house-building group, reports pre-tax profits fell from £37.1 million to £8.1 million for the year to October. The 4.65p final dividend makes an unchanged 7.65p.

Temps, page 25

THE POUND

US dollar 1.9805 (-0.0120)
German mark 2.9044 (+0.0003)
Exchange Index 94.4 (-0.2)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share 1817.5 (+25.8)
FT-SE 100 2294.4 (+26.6)
New York Dow Jones 2914.85 (+5.68)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 25356.37 (+216.90)

INTEREST RATES

London Bank Base 13.5%
3-month Interbank 13.5-13.75%
3-month eligible bills 12.5-12.75%
US: Prime Rate 9%
Federal Funds 5.5%
3-month Treasury Bills 5.85-5.85%
30-year bonds 8.85-8.85%

CURRENCIES

London: New York
£ \$1.9805
DM 2.9044
Sfr 2.0003
Yen 163.60
ECU 1.9366
US: Prime Rate 9%
Federal Funds 5.5%
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MAJOR CHANGES

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GOLD

London: New York
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Sfr 2.0003
Yen 163.60
ECU 1.9366
US: Prime Rate 9%
Federal Funds 5.5%
3-month Treasury Bills 5.85-5.85%
30-year bonds 8.85-8.85%

NORTH SEA OIL

Shed (Mar) \$19.50 oil (\$20.20)
Dutch latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

Bank Buy Bank Sell
Australia 2.55 2.45
Canada 1.55 1.45
France 6.55 6.45
Germany 3.35 3.25
Italy 1.65 1.55
Japan 165 155
Netherlands 2.15 2.05
Portugal 205 195
Spain 165 155
Sweden 10.5 9.5
Switzerland 2.05 1.95
Turkey 1.85 1.75
USA 1.95 1.85
Yugoslavia 35 30

Rates for small denominations only at
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US: Prime Rate 9%
Federal Funds 5.5%
3-month Treasury Bills 5.85-5.85%
30-year bonds 8.85-8.85%

Investment hit as output fall quickens

By COLIN NARRROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE fall in Britain's manufacturing output has quickened dramatically as the recession deepens with the downward trend now running at an annual 8 per cent, according to official estimates.

Central Statistical Office figures illustrating the deteriorating picture in output were accompanied by data showing that companies are adjusting to the counter-inflationary squeeze by cutting back investment plans severely.

In the final quarter of 1990, manufacturers' capital spending was a provisional £2.66 billion, more than 7 per cent below the previous quarter and more than 15 per cent lower than the final quarter of 1989.

Total expenditure was the

Earnings growth stays at 9.75%

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

EARNINGS growth has remained unchanged at a high level, according to the latest official figures.

Ministers believe that the combination of high interest rates, rising unemployment, membership of the European exchange-rate mechanism and other measures will lead to a drop in the rate of earnings growth.

But yesterday's figures showed earnings increases in December at an underlying rate of 9.75 per cent, the same as in the previous two months, and only marginally down from the high point last July of 10.25 per cent.

In fact, the percentage increase in earnings across the economy measured by the employment department actually rose sharply in December, from 9.3 per cent for the 12 months to November to 10.1 per cent for the same period to December. Officials said this was mainly because of Christmas and year-end bonuses being paid.

Sectorally, the earnings averages look worse. Though the

Bank view on inflation clouds Major's message

By ANATOLE KALISZKY, ECONOMICS EDITOR

THERE has been "little sign" of a fall in Britain's underlying inflation, the Bank of England said yesterday, casting doubt on repeated assertions by the prime minister that interest rates would be cut only when underlying inflation was clearly on the way down.

In its quarterly bulletin, the Bank expresses unease about some of the economic consequences of membership of the European exchange-rate mechanism. Although the Bank reiterates its support for the government's opposition to currency realignments in the ERM, it also acknowledges that the combination of ERM entry and German reunification posed an "awkward dilemma".

The only way out of this would be for Britain to have lower inflation than Germany,

the Bank said.

"Despite the move into recession, there is as yet little sign that either earnings growth or underlying inflation has declined," the bulletin said.

Although the "headline" inflation rate, including mortgage and poll tax payments, had fallen sharply and would continue to do so, unit labour costs were still rising much faster than in other major ERM countries.

The bulletin was written well before last Monday's unexpected announcement that producer price inflation was still running at the peak rate of 6.3 per cent, recorded last summer before the recession began.

The Bank has long considered producer prices a key indicator of underlying inflation and its comments therefore appeared to undercut Treasury reassurances that the producer price figures were a misleading aberration and John Major's statement in the Commons that they were "suspect".

Officials made it clear, however, that the Bank's concern about the underlying inflation rate did not reflect any disagreement with the Treasury over the timing of this week's cut in interest rates.

Indeed, there were indications that the Bank's thinking is moving away from the headline view that interest rates can be cut only after inflation is seen to be falling. Bank economists are stressing that a pronounced fall in underlying inflation tends to come only near the end of a recessionary cycle.

lowest since the third quarter of 1987.

Gerard Lyons, chief economist at DKB International, said manufacturing was in a "very weak state indeed". The clear message was that more interest rate cuts would be needed urgently, he said.

The speed of the deterioration was demonstrated in the CSO estimates of the trend fall in manufacturing output. Now running at an annual 8 per cent, it was only last month put at 6 per cent, after 3 per cent the previous month.

In December, manufacturing output showed a small increase, rising a seasonally adjusted 0.3 per cent after a revised 1.4 per cent fall in November.

But the CSO said the rise, the first since last May, was due to a boost to output from the Gulf conflict, largely concentrated in the aerospace industry. Without this, output would have fallen.

In the final quarter of 1990, manufacturing industry produced 2.9 per cent less than in the previous quarter, the biggest quarter-on-quarter drop since January 1981. Compared with the final quarter of 1989, it was down 3 per cent. Overall industrial output, comprising energy and manufacturing production, showed a 0.4 per cent fall in December after a 1.5 per cent fall in November, reflecting continued problems that are restraining North Sea oil and gas output. Without the Gulf effect, the December fall was an estimated 1 per cent.

Final-quarter industrial production was 1.6 per cent below the previous quarter and 3.2 per cent down on the fourth quarter of 1989.

The decline in manufacturing was broadly based, with food, drink and tobacco, which at times seemed recession-proof, falling 0.7 per cent between the latest quarters. Car output was an exception, showing a 2.7 per cent rise over the same period.

For the whole of 1990, industrial output fell 0.5 per cent after 0.5 per cent growth in 1989. Manufacturing showed a similar fall last year, but grew 4.2 per cent the previous year.

Total capital expenditure by manufacturers in 1990 was £11.75 billion, more than 5 per cent lower than the previous year. Spending on motor vehicles dropped almost 18 per cent, while plant, machinery and building expenditure was 5 per cent down.

Gordon Brown, the shadow trade secretary, described the figures for manufacturing investment as "disastrous", saying they meant not only higher unemployment now, but more job losses, bankruptcies, and cuts in future.

"Britain is now the only country in western Europe facing 1992 with investment falling dramatically," he said.

Glenn Davies, chief economist at Credit Lyonnais Securities, said the investment situation was "frightening", but was to be expected given the recession.

At a conference on international banking, Brian Quinn, the Bank's executive director responsible for banking supervision, said that regulators should consider "very carefully the wider benefits" that such mergers could bring. However, in the short term, national considerations make it unlikely that "significant foreign ownership of core banking institutions" will take place.

He said: "It may in time become easier to accept that Europe's wider interests, not just in promoting the efficiency of banks within Europe but also in enhancing their ability to compete for business around the world, may lie in allowing some very large pan-European banks to develop."

Mr Quinn, who is the chairman of a supervisory sub-committee of the EC central bank governors, hinted that Brussels would not automatically seek to block bank mergers. "Central banks and regulators would be prepared to look at each proposal," he said, though it was not their task "to promote such alliances actively".

Rather, opposition to bank mergers would be strongest at national level because of government fears about big domestic banks falling into foreign hands.

Bank mergers are likely to be most frequent among smaller banks.

BP warning with £1.6bn profit

By MARTIN BARROW

BP expects to incur substantial stock losses in the first quarter of this year because of the sharp fall in oil prices since the start of war in the Gulf.

The warning was announced with profits of £1.676 billion (£1.744 billion), for last year, calculated on a historic cost basis, including stock gains of £472 million. Profits fell despite average oil prices of nearly \$24 a barrel, \$6 higher than in 1989.

On a replacement cost basis, which excludes the impact of oil stocks, profits fell from £1.361 billion to £1.204 billion despite a final quarter recovery from £345 million to £456 million. Earnings fell from 31.8p a share to 31.3p. A final quarterly dividend of 4.20p a share takes the total for the year to 16.05p (14.90p).

Operating profits from exploration and production rose from £1.574 billion to £2.086 billion, including almost £400 million from disposals. Refining and marketing increased its contribution from £732 million to £853 million, despite a poor fourth quarter, in which earnings fell from £248 million to £115 million.

Chemical activities contributed £7 million in the last quarter, and reported annual profits down from £548 million to £129 million.

Robert Horton, the chairman, expects the price of oil to remain close to the current level of \$20 a barrel in the short term, rising later in the year. However, David Simon, the deputy chairman and chief operating officer, added that the total dividend, up less than 8 per cent, "underlines our cautious approach".

Temps, page 25



Optimism on oil: Robert Horton, BP's chairman, expects prices to rise later this year

Big banks in Europe 'may have to merge'

By JONATHAN PRYNN

INTERNATIONAL competitive pressures in the Nineties may trigger huge mergers of European banks to create institutions capable of presenting a global challenge to American and Japanese banks, according to a director of the Bank of England.

At a conference on international banking, Brian Quinn, the Bank's executive director responsible for banking supervision, said that regulators should consider "very carefully the wider benefits" that such mergers could bring. However, in the short term, national considerations make it unlikely that "significant foreign ownership of core banking institutions" will take place.

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Rather, opposition to bank mergers would be strongest at national level because of government fears about big domestic banks falling into foreign hands.

Bank mergers are likely to be most frequent among smaller banks.

BT surprises City with 13% third-quarter rise

By GRAHAM SEARJEANT, FINANCIAL EDITOR

BRITISH Telecom's pre-tax profits for the third quarter to end-December rose 13.2 per cent to £787 million, well ahead of most City forecasts, despite signs that the recession is slowing the growth of business. Iain Vallance, the chairman, said growth in use of telephones was likely to slow further.

Income from international calls fell 2 per cent in the last three months of 1990, the first drop on record. The setback followed price cuts and much slower growth of 0.5 per cent, in the volume of calls, compared with a moving 12 months average of 9 per cent.

Inland calls grew 2 per cent in the third quarter, a third of their annual rate of growth, but revenue grew 6 per cent due to price increases last autumn. Total group turnover rose 6.3 per cent to £3.3 billion.

The growth in profits came from control of costs and working capital. Barry

Romeril, the finance director, said revenue was lower than expected, but profits had benefited from "attention to detail and value for money". Savings are expected to continue in the last quarter.

Capital spending was held back to £690 million by savings on land, buildings and engineering stores. Mr Romeril expects spending for the year to be slightly lower than the £3 billion expected at the start of the year. He said the shortfall would be real savings rather than postponement of spending.

Over the first nine months of the financial year, group pre-tax profits rose 15.5 per cent to £2.32 billion on a 7.9 per cent rise in turnover to £9.675 billion. Earnings per share climbed 15 per cent to 25p. BT's share capital has risen £150 million due to employees taking up share options at the end of the group's first five-year savings scheme.

Mr Vallance warned shareholders that prospects would be affected by the outcome of the government's telephone duopoly review, over which BT has argued that the planned move to unrestricted competition should be matched by the scrapping of many existing and proposed restrictions on its own operations and charging structures.

Doug Henderson, the Labour party's telecommunications spokesman, called for BT's future pricing structure to be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission rather than be fixed after secret arguments with regulators and competitors.

A comparison issued by Ofel shows BT's average residential telephone bill is comparable to those in Germany or Italy, but higher than in France, where there is a state monopoly. Business bills are lower in France, but higher in Italy.

Comment, page 25

NatWest Business Accounts INTEREST RATES

NatWest announces the following interest rates, effective from 14th February 1991:

Solicitors Reserve Account

Customers not affected by CRT	Customers affected by CRT		
Gross interest per annum	Balance	Net interest per annum	Go to equivalent rate to a bank rate taxpayer
12.125%	Instant Access - No minimum deposit/withdrawal		
12.125%	£250,000 and above	9.00%	12.00%
12.125%	£100,000 - £249,999	9.00%	12.00%
11.75%	£25,000 - £99,999	8.75%	11.67%
11.375%	£2,000 - £24,999	8.50%	11.33%
8.50%	£500 - £1,999	6.375%	8.50%

National Westminster Bank PLC
41 Lothbury London EC2P 2BP

Fudging the unemployment figures

COMMENT

The warnings from the City and elsewhere about yesterday's unemployment figures had been so dire that when they came, a rise in unemployment — seasonally adjusted — of 46,200 did not seem too bad. Unadjusted, so-called headline unemployment rose by well over 100,000, and seems set next month to burst through the psychologically important 2 million mark, last seen in Britain two years ago.

When that does come, almost certainly next month, the focus will be, as it was yesterday, on the unadjusted rate, with the adjusted figure lagging some way behind, still considerably below 2 million. Statisticians prefer the seasonally adjusted figure, arguing that it is a "clean" series, untainted by the vicissitudes of passing months, and that it provides the best guide to the overall unemployment trend.

So it does. But it is inevitable that business, and journalistic, attention will focus on whichever figure is the higher as the guide to unemployment they want to see — particularly if, as in yesterday's figures, the seasonal adjustment

made is so large. Unadjusted, unemployment rose by 109,000 in the month to January 10. Adjusted, it rose by only 46,000 — considerably less than last month's seasonally adjusted increase, which was put then at 80,400, but which has since been revised downwards to 79,200.

As *Soap* used to say: confused? You should be. But it gets worse. Trying to determine how the "seasonal" adjustment is made is to put it at its mildest, venturing deep into the realms of the obscure. It recalls the old schoolroom Schleswig-Holstein question. Only three people understood this one: one is dead, one is mad — and one works in the Department of Employment.

Despite suspicious about the sheer size of this month's "seasonal" adjustment, taking out 63,300 from the figures at a stroke, there is a widespread belief, perhaps even a hope, that the statisticians are getting their sums right. Probably, they are.

But after the credibility battering the monthly unemployment figures took in the Eighties, with some 30 changes of counting method, for the government to explain fully and properly its process of "seasonal" adjustment might not be a bad idea.

BT troubles

British Telecom is proving more resilient to the recession so far than it might. Profits are moving nicely ahead despite the usual buoyant volume and revenue growth slowing to a trickle. That is only possible thanks to cost-cutting and good house-keeping aimed at giving it a lower base to combat further stiffening of competition that is bound to follow from the upcoming results of the gov-

ernment's review of its duopoly with Cable and Wireless subsidiary Mercury.

But will that be enough? BT shares are still suffering from the combination of jam today but fear of less tomorrow and especially in the years after. The trouble with the original proposals, which may not be greatly changed, is that they failed to come to grips with a growing conflict between the urge for more competition and the urge to impose regulations on existing monopoly positions.

BT understandably complains about being held back from offering new services to allow new foreign competitors to become established, since the gain to consumers is not obvious. The clearer conflict is over its pricing structure and over threatened new price controls on

international calls, which are highly profitable though not unduly expensive on international comparisons.

If BT is allowed to offer wider varieties of price packages, particularly featuring higher rental and lower call charges, it may become a more formidable competitor to those with less infrastructure who can undercut it on calls. If it is not allowed to make economic charges, however, BT is forced to become an unfair competitor, stifling potential competition in the basic network.

Banking woes

The rest of the world may be worried over the parlous state of the American banking system, but most senior American bankers seem remarkably relaxed about the future. Chase Manhattan's chairman, Thomas G. LaBrecque, was

even talking of a fundamental long-term renewal. He pointed to the measures taken recently to streamline operations, cut costs and provision against expected heavy losses.

The cornerstone of his argument was the belief that Congress and the American public were coming to accept that a fragmented financial structure would not foster investment and growth. Clearly much is expected of the moves towards reform which would allow banking and financial services conglomerates to develop.

But customers regulators should ask whether or not the present problems are structural or, as seems more likely, caused through poor management decisions.

The disastrous enthusiasm for Third World lending, the explosion of leveraged transactions and explosion of ill-judged credit growth are at the heart of the current malaise. It is time for bankers to go back to basics, not trigger off another round of corporate concentration in the hope that things will be better this time.

Sealing the fates of ITV's minnows



No sacrifices: George Russell, chairman of the ITC

the moratorium on takeovers is lifted in 1994," he said. Until then, the smaller companies will be protected from rival bids by their ITV neighbours. Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, last month changed the ownership rules to prevent television companies from bidding for two

lines, issued in advance to the Press yesterday, require any company bidding for more licences than it can hold under the cross-ownership restrictions to rank their preferred regions in order of preference.

This will mean Virgin and Carlton Communications, which are considering multiple bids for a number of regions each — TVS, Thames, LWT, Central and Anglia considered to be the most likely targets — will have to gamble on imponderables.

What if Virgin's first choice is Thames and it fails to make the highest bid, but its fifth and least preferred choice is TVS and its bid is the highest?

Smaller companies will only have to pay what they can afford to a central scheduler for a programme like *Coronation Street*, which costs just £72,000 to produce, but could bring in £200,000 an episode for Granada had the ITC succumbed to a truly commercialised network tariff system. It means that the larger companies will earn less revenue from network programme sales, while the smaller companies will be able to buy network programmes without running the risk of financial ruin.

The guidelines stipulate that the new Channel 3 licences must collectively draw up and publish commercial terms upon which the network programme commissions would be negotiated.

All would contribute to the network budget, estimated at £500 million a year, but commissions will be in line with "ability to pay".

The ITC's networking guidelines, approved under the Broadcasting Act by the Office of Fair Trading, which must ensure the system is not "anti-competitive", will be good news for the independent production companies, which will be able to supply their programmes directly to an independent central scheduler, chosen collectively by the licencees.

MELINDA WITTSTOCK
Media Correspondent

Gulf instability hurts BP

TEMPUS

BP SHARES have fallen more than 8 per cent relative to the market since the Gulf war began and, judging by the company's cautious view of 1991, further downgrades are imminent.

A final dividend of 4.20p, up from 3.95p, was at the top end of expectations, but a total dividend of 16.05p, against a prospective multiple of 18, with a yield of 7.3 per cent, and a weak hold.

Robert Horion, chairman, sees prices rising from the current \$20 once the overhang of high stock levels is removed after the war. Others see prices falling further as Iraq and Kuwait come back on stream.

Following a sharp fall in oil prices on the outbreak of war BP faces certain stock losses in the first quarter.

Higher feedstock costs and declining demand had a sharp impact on chemicals and there is no sign of a quick recovery.

Strong refining margins in Europe offset disappointing margins in the United States while marketing recovered from sharp third-quarter losses. But both remain finely balanced.

Replacement-cost profits could fall again from £1.2 billion to £1.1 billion in the current year. On a historic cost basis, profits of £930 million against £1.676 billion seem realistic, assuming a \$21 barrel, with earnings of 17p a share, down from 31.3p. At 30p the shares trade on a prospective multiple of 18, with a yield of 7.3 per cent, and a weak hold.

Roger Lewis, chief executive, is very much of the "too little, too late" school and sees scant prospects for restored customer confidence until base rates fall to 12 per cent and the Gulf war ends.

Meantime, the company is shoring up its balance sheet by maintaining house sale volumes, even at the expense of margins, and building a bank of low cost land. In the short term, though, that means more pressure on the P & L.

The dividend is maintained at 7.65p, though Crest is digging deep into reserves to pay for it. But the company

has warned that if, as expected, trading does not improve, the dividend for the current year will have to be cut. Given that, in its words, the half year "will inevitably show a loss", lower full year profits must be on the cards.

The City is expecting about £5 million this year, putting the shares on an almost meaningless multiple of 64, though analysts are more interested in the prospects for the recovery year, 1992. If the residential and commercial property markets do start moving again, Crest may make £12 million-£15 million in 1992 year, valuing the shares at a more respectable p/e of about 10. At best, a long term hold.

Crest Nicholson

THIS week's base rate cut brought little cheer to Crest Nicholson, the housebuilding, property development and construction group, which reported a fall in pre-tax profits from £37.1 million to £8.1 million for the year to end October.

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BOC

THE BOC Group, once so adept at currency hedging that volatile exchange movements used to pass it by, was hit by a £10 million exchange negative in the three months ended December, which helped cut reported pre-tax profits from £81.5 million to £71.4 million.

BOC also suffered from a higher interest charge which helped dent pre-tax profits, while, at the net level, earnings were additionally hurt by a

higher than expected tax charge and turned out at 9.29p (11.31p) a share.

But for exchange rate movements — most noticeable in the vacuum and distribution division, where operating profits fell from £6.7 million to £3.8 million — BOC would have painted a brighter picture for its gas and health care interests.

And, but for the assurance, already given under its dividend alert policy, that this year's dividend will total 20.4p a share, BOC's shares might have performed badly yesterday.

They actually rose 3p to 539p, though year-end pre-tax profit estimates have been trimmed yet again.

The market now looks for £330 million pre-tax against earlier thoughts of £348 million (and an actual £354.3 million last year) and 1992 forecasts have been lowered from £371 million to £360 million. The more important currencies that BOC has to concern itself about remain the Australian and American dollars and the yen.

But currency concerns have now overtaken the trading and economic considerations when assessing BOC's shares and, against that background, the shares, on 12 times' prospective earnings, backed by a 5 per cent yield, are not especially appealing.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Burrowing back to work

QUENTIN Burrows, former head of options at NatWest Stockbrokers, has resurfaced in the Square Mile after a three-month break. He has teamed up with Oliver Gillie, a former international metals trader, and Patrick Thompson, former marketing manager at the London Traded Options Market, to launch a new broking firm aimed specifically at private clients. To be known as Derivative Securities, the firm has just been granted its Stock Exchange membership and is now ready to do business, despite the gloom of the recession. "It's good that someone is starting at such a gloomy time," says Gillie, the chairman, who studied mathematics at Trinity College, Cambridge, before going on to buy tin and nickel on behalf of a number of companies, including RTZ. Meanwhile Burrows, who left NatWest last October, is well placed to keep a wary eye on developments in the Gulf. He spent several years as an oilman in the Middle East before joining NatWest.

Loving lawyers
BANKERS and stockbrokers, if the truth be known, are not nearly as romantic as some hot-blooded types in the Square Mile would like to think. To their eternal shame, the honour of being the most romantic on St Valentine's

Day goes to their age-old rivals, the City's legion of solicitors, who will, it seems, leap at the chance to demonstrate their ardour. Charles Tyrwhitt Shirts, the shirt-maker, set out to find the most romantic firm in the City and reveals that the title belongs not to the likes of Cazenove but to the law firm Cameron Markby Hewitt. Tyrwhitt, which offered to send a dozen red roses to anyone who bought three of its shirts, found a total lack of interest from the banking sector. The City gents at Lehman Brothers and UBS Phillips & Drew failed to send a single rose between them. "The lawyers went absolutely mad," says a spokesman, adding that most of the roses were sent by solicitors to solicitors, with the greatest number of recipients being at Allen & Overy. One budding male lawyer at Ashurst Morris Crisp even

sent a dozen roses to himself but Tyrwhitt refused to disclose his name. Sources within the firm, however, reveal that this unidentified lawyer took this seemingly strange course of action so that he could present the bouquet of roses personally... to his mistress and not his wife.

Sporting chance

AFTER scouting the market for the best part of a year to find someone to run its fund management arm, Hill Samuel has finally turned to its own ranks. Philip Beaven, an employee since 1970, has just been named managing director of Hill Samuel Investment Management, the British institutional arm of TSB Group. "I am not planning a dramatic shake-up," says Beaven, aged 44, who until recently was as keen on sport as on the world of business. After tackling the 1986 university challenge while at Queen's College, Oxford, he went on to play rugby for Streatham & Croydon before finally hanging up his boots four years ago. He now claims that learning to fly an aircraft is as much of an interest as investment, although prospects for the former do not look too good. "I've been trying to get my private pilot's licence for years, but never seem to have both money and time at the same moment," he says.

Apple-ation
A SPELL in the insolvency department of an accountant

may be just the ticket for setting up a new business, particularly in these times. It has certainly done no harm for Lawrence Mallinson, who helped launch The New Covent Garden Soup Company in 1988. Now, he is promoting James White Applejuice, which supplies shops and supermarkets with filtered apple juice. "The problem with the juice is that it looks terrible," says Mallinson, aged 33, who read history and law at Cambridge before joining P&T Marwick McIntock in 1977. "But filtered, it looks like white wine, and that's how we package it."

Raven-on

RUMOURS circulating in the Square Mile that Stephen Raven, former chairman of Garban, the second biggest inter-dealer broker, had left the firm after a bust-up, are, he tells me, entirely untrue. "I actually stood down as chairman in December but I am still a non-executive director and I still represent Garban on the Stock Exchange Council," he says. Raven, who celebrates his 53rd birthday next Tuesday, says he stood down because he wanted to devote more time to his Stock Exchange work — he is already deputy chairman of the membership committee, the quality of markets committee and the trading markets board

European help for airlines considered

EUROPEAN competition rules are set to be waived to allow a package of emergency measures to help airlines weather the sharp downturn in passengers triggered by the Gulf war.

The measures, to be considered by the European Commission executive next Wednesday, will allow airlines to co-operate in withdrawal of flights to improve load factors. They will last initially for three months.

Karel Van Miert, the transport commissioner, told reporters the package did not constitute "a blank cheque" for the airlines. European airlines have seen passenger figures drop by around 30 per cent over fears of terrorism. Mr Van Miert said that when business returned to normal, the commissions' liberalisation drive would continue.

He said if the package was accepted, the commission would be prepared to approve cuts in services by the airlines to share capacity. The commission would also protect airlines from having their take off and landing slots at airports redistributed.

Approval of any fare rises because of the crisis would be speeded up, and government aid to cover spiralling insurance and air safety costs would be acceptable, but the commission would step in if it judged the aid excessive or unrelated to the war. Other cost-cutting measures would probably include a 9 per cent ceiling on value-added tax on air services.

Mr Van Miert said the concessions would not necessarily work in the consumer's interests.

□ America is asking the world trade body, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, to decide whether German government subsidies to Airbus Industrie, the aircraft manufacturing group, breach its code. Carla Hills, the American trade representative, said yesterday.

ROSS TIEMAN
Industrial Correspondent



CAROL LEONARD

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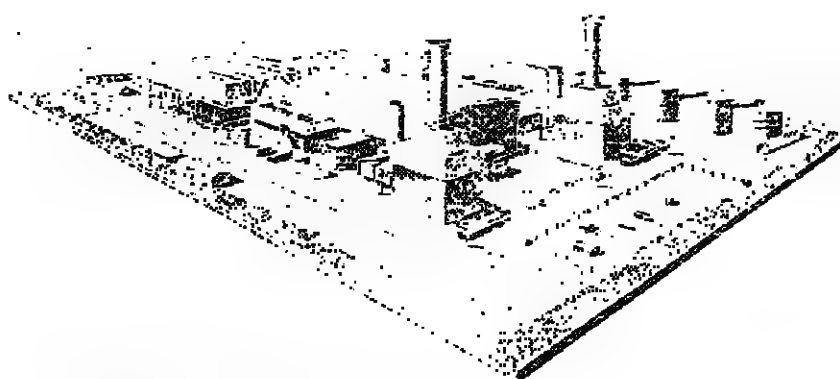
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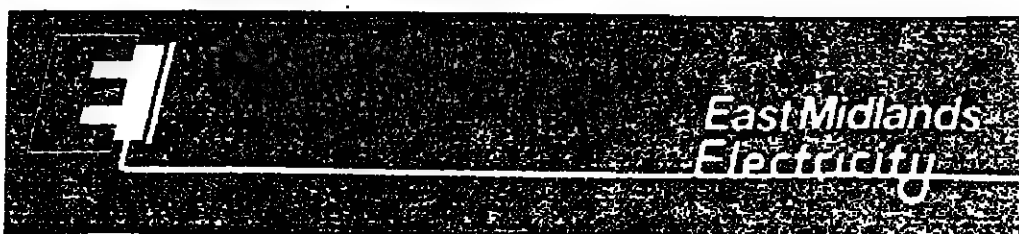
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WALL STREET

New York STOCKS rose in the morning in a follow-through of Wednesday's strong close. Blue chips slipped on some profit-taking but the Dow Jones industrial average was still up 4 points at 2,913.16. Dealers said that while a consolidation may trim gains, the general direction remains up.

George Pirrone, a senior dealer at Dreyfus, said that investors were becoming nervous, which propels the market.

(Reuters)

STOCK MARKET

M&S price falters as City fears it finds going tough

THE recession is continuing to bite in the high street and even the big players are finding the going tough with Marks and Spencer's shares falling 6p to 234p. Whispers in the Square Mile suggest that sales in January failed to live up to expectations, although M&S has refused to comment.

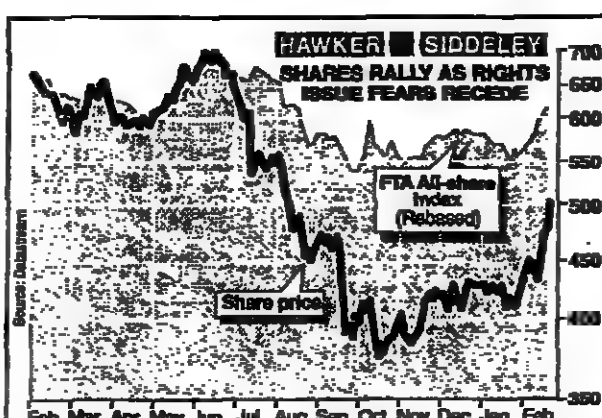
Sales of autumn clothing are believed to have been sluggish, but food has been even more affected and the likelihood of M&S improving on last year's pre-tax profits of £611.6 million appears remote. Bill Curry, a retail analyst at Hoare Govett, the broker, announced this week that trading at M&S was worse than the market had thought.

Mr Curry said: "You cannot buck the trend. We are looking for a second-half drop in profits."

He is forecasting pre-tax profits of £615 million for the current year, to March 31. Mr Curry added: "M&S is suffering worse this time round than it did in the recession of the early Eighties."

The fall in the M&S share price was highlighted by the rise in the rest of the equity market, the FT-SE 100 index climbing 26.6 to 2,944.4, having been almost 40 points higher.

Dealers said the surge was led by the arbitrageurs who decided to sell futures and buy in the cash market, catching market-makers on the hop. By the close of business, more than 700 million shares had been traded with sentiment boosted by another firm start to trading by Wall Street.



Government securities saw gains halved, ending 1/4 better with supplies of the eco bond exhausted.

Wm Low, the Scottish securities dealer, said that the 20 per cent stake, Goldman Sachs, the American securities house, placed the 11 million ordinary shares at 294p each and the 8 million convertible preference shares at 141 1/2p each with various institutions.

Third-quarter figures from British Telecom were at the top end of expectations with pre-tax profits climbing £94 million to £787 million with earnings a share 1p higher at 8.5p. The shares advanced 3p to 296p.

Salomon Brothers, the American securities house, says that the company report spells the beginning of the end of BT's dominance. But it is telling its clients not to rush out and buy Cable and Wireless, up 8p at 513p, just yet.

BOC Group, the industrial gases supplier, fell 9p to 527p after reporting a drop in first-quarter pre-tax profits of £10 million to £71.4 million. Richard Giordano, the chairman, complained that adverse currency movements had made a dent in profits but added that the business had grown in real terms.

Fisons rose 11p to 403p after a survey of asthma sufferers by ten American professors at the Heart, Lung and Blood Institute concluded that the group's two main treatments, Inal and Tilade, were the best available.

Hawker Siddeley shrugged off last week's dullness, stemming from speculation about a rights issue with a rise of 22p to 510p. Dealers now claim that the group is vulnerable and could soon find itself on the receiving end of a bid. There has been talk that BTR has been building up a stake as the prelude to a bid.

appointing figures recently, leading to claims that it is looking for acquisitions to boost earnings. A bid from one of the German industrial groups, or Hanson, cannot be ruled out. Hanson held steady at 215p despite a number of profit downgrades by analysts in the wake of Wednesday's first-quarter figures, showing flat earnings growth.

BAA rose 3p to 363p after announcing plans to raise £150 million via a Euro-conversionable bond dated 2016. The group expects to spend £1.2 billion developing the proposed Terminal 5 at Heathrow.

NSM, the opencast coal mining and building products group, fell 6p to 26p after issuing a profits warning. The group says it has been unable to dispose of exhausted coal sites because of the worsening position of the building and property sectors. Several of its British investments are taking longer than expected to make a contribution and this has resulted in higher borrowings.

The group is now forecasting a small loss for the second half and is predicting significantly lower profits for the full year.

A profit warning left Eurocom, the office equipment group, 59p lower at 95p while Sheraton Securities, the property developer, tumbled 3p to 4p after reporting an interim loss of £56.6 million against a profit last time of £11.8 million.

MICHAEL CLARK

Tokyo rises for eighth day running

Tokyo PRICES closed firmer for the eighth day running in the heaviest dealings for more than a year. The Nikkei index was up 216.9 points, or 0.86 per cent, to 25,356.37. The Nikkei's close was the highest since September 3.

Turnover expanded to 1.1 billion shares, the heaviest since December, 1989, compared with 950 million on Wednesday. Momentum from

Wall Street's rally continued to overwhelm profit-taking as investors debated how long the bandwagon would keep rolling, traders said.

Ross Kowbury, the chief broker at Sanyo Securities, said: "The confidence is still there. But it looks like the market is a little too heavy and people are becoming more defensive."

• Singapore - Prices rose across the board in pre-holi-

day, half-day trading on strong buying fuelled by a sharp rise on Wall Street. The Straits Times industrial index advanced 15.45 points to 1,338.70. The market closed at midday for the Chinese new year holidays and will reopen on Monday.

• Sydney - The market limped to a weaker close as investors absorbed economic statistics which gave little hope of a rapid recovery from

recession. The All-Ordinaries index eased 5.3 to 1,372.9.

• Frankfurt - Early buying which pushed Germany's Dax index above psychological resistance at 1,500 faded quickly, with shares ending mixed. The Dax ended 289 points lower at 1,486.72 after reaching a high for the day of 1,505.51.

• Hong Kong was closed for the Chinese new year holidays. (Reuters)

LONDON TRADED OPTIONS

Symbol	Call	Put	Symbol	Call	Put
ABX (1991)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (1992)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (1993)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (1994)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
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ABX (2009)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2010)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2011)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2012)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2013)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2014)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2015)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2016)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2017)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2018)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2019)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2020)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2021)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2022)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2023)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2024)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2025)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2026)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2027)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2028)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2029)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2030)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2031)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2032)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
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ABX (2061)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2062)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
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ABX (2067)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2068)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2069)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2070)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2071)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2072)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2073)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2074)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2075)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2076)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2077)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2078)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2079)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2080)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2081)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2082)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2083)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2084)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2085)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2086)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2087)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2088)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2089)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2090)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2091)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2092)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2093)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2094)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2095)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2096)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2097)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2098)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30
ABX (2099)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30	ABX (2100)	100 18 45 1 30	100 18 45 1 30

INTERNATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Social Science Research Council

Human Dimensions of Global Environment Change

The SSRC anticipates adding a position as program officer for the Committee for Research on Global Environmental Change. This Committee focuses on the human dimensions of long-term environmental changes that occur at the level of continents or larger. Training and research on the environment are desirable but not mandatory in the applicant's record. More importantly, this person should be a social scientist trained at the doctorate level for research in economics, geography, political science, sociology, or related fields; international in orientation and experience; capable of learning this interdisciplinary subject matter; and be able to work with both social and natural scientists. We would also expect this person to assist the Council in collateral program development, e.g. in health, and epidemiology, peace and security, development or resource economics, quantitative modelling and methodology, or other areas.

This full-time involves preparing and negotiating grant proposals for expansion of this program; assisting in the design of research programs and research consortia; planning seminars, workshops, and conferences; administering possible fellowship and grant competitions; supervising support staff; contributing to the Council's overall program; and maintaining relationships with researchers and academic and research institutions throughout the world.

Applicants must hold the Ph.D. in a relevant field. Writing skills are essential. Administrative experience and demonstrated fund-raising ability are desirable. The Council seeks applications from scholars with several years of teaching, research, and/or administrative experience, although it may also consider recent recipients of the Ph.D. Scholars are competitive with those at U.S. universities. The person appointed should be able to take up the position on or before September 1, 1991.

To apply, before June 1, 1991 send (a) a letter of application, (b) a curriculum vitae, and (c) three letters of reference to:

Global Change Search
Social Science Research Council
605 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10158
An Equal Opportunity Employer

An Italian system engineering and implementation company (part of a major U.S.A. corporation) with main offices in Rome, Italy, active in the telecommunications field, seeks system engineers with a good experience in one, or more, of the following areas:

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Please reply in writing to:

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Virginia Indonesia Company (VICO), a leading international oil and gas company with extensive operations in Indonesia is actively seeking experienced Engineers and Geologists. These positions are based in Indonesia and are family status approved.

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• BS or MS in Petroleum Engineering • Minimum 10 years experience in Reservoir Engineering • Proficient in reservoir computer simulation • Ability to design and develop work programs • Previous overseas experience preferred

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• BS or MS in Petroleum Engineering • Minimum 10 years experience in Production Engineering • Proficient in production computer simulation • Ability to design and develop work programs • Previous overseas experience preferred

GEOLOGISTS (4)

• BS or MS in Geology • Minimum 12 years related experience • Strong background in lithology • Experience in structural and tectonic geology • Previous overseas experience preferred

DRILLING ENGINEERS (2)

• BS Degree in Petroleum or Mechanical Engineering • Minimum 10 years experience in the oil industry in Drilling Engineering and Operations • Familiarity with workover and recompletion projects and equipment, and an understanding of multi-complex techniques • Familiarity with Gulf Coast type drilling conditions, including progress, formation damage, etc. • Previous overseas experience is desirable

DRILLING SUPERINTENDENT

• BS Degree in Petroleum, Mechanical or Chemical Engineering • Minimum 20 years experience in drilling engineering and operations, workovers and field operations • Strong supervisory and leadership skills • Familiarity with downhole tools and equipment, and ability to analyze downhole conditions • Familiarity with Gulf Coast type drilling conditions, including progress, formation damage, etc. • Previous overseas experience is desirable

SENIOR MECHANICAL ENGINEERING SPECIALIST

• BS or MS in Mechanical Engineering • Minimum 12 years experience with operating company in petrochemical or gas industries or an international engineering and construction company • Experience in plant design and commissioning • Knowledge of turbine and compressor design and manufacturing methods, strength of materials and selection of materials for corrosion and wear resistance • Full working knowledge of construction and trouble-shooting procedures for mechanical equipment, including piping, etc.

PROCESS ENGINEERING SUPERINTENDENT

• BS or MS in Chemical Engineering • 10-15 years engineering experience, with emphasis on process engineering applications within LNG/Cryogenics process plants • Experience required in all phases of plant process engineering, including trouble-shooting, project development and design, equipment selection, operation, maintenance, and monitoring of continuous within plant • Previous overseas experience in LNG/Cryogenics environment preferred

VICO provides an attractive overseas compensation and benefits package along with a challenging work environment. Candidates please send resume and letter detailing employment history and salary history to:

VICO, VIRGINIA INDONESIA COMPANY, P.O. Box 1551, Houston, Texas 77251-1551, After Staffing Department

No Phone Calls Please Principals Only M/F EOE

ABB is the world's leading group in the electrotechnical industry. We are active in more than 140 countries, with 220,000 employees worldwide.

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To build up and strengthen our Joint Ventures' financial teams in Poland and Hungary we need qualified and experienced specialists on site who seek to use and expand their knowledge and skills in a challenging environment.

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Key job elements:

- Introduction of Western finance and control systems in joint ventures
- support of the accounting function
- establish financial reporting systems
- set up control systems
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This assignment for ABB would start immediately and extend through 1991 with possibility of prolongation.

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Interesting Sales Opportunity

Established German manufacturer of drive-on-one-step automatic test stands for brakes, alignment and suspension seeks sales agents for the United Kingdom. Must be ready for "Aftermarket" exhibition at Olympia, London 3-5 March 91. Excellent Opportunity for

dynamic and experienced person

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OVER FIFTY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

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The constituent colleges of the University of Limerick are: Business, Engineering & Science and Humanities. The Limerick campus is located at the heart of the E60-acre Prospera Technological Park on the banks of the River Shannon.

The College of Business has a student enrolment in excess of 1

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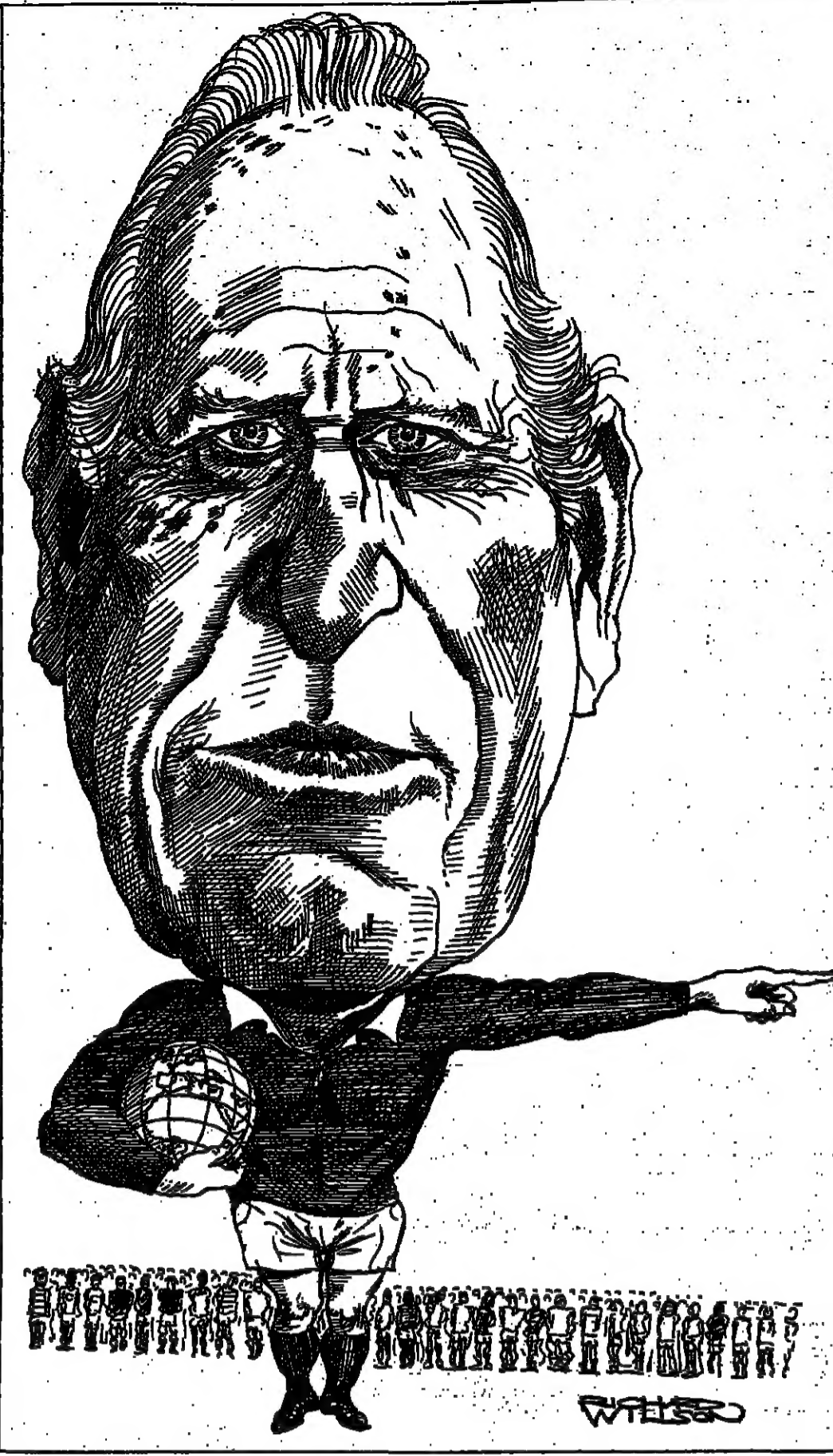
Mr Fifa casts his old eye on the New World

And football is run by this forbidding 75-year-old former water polo player, a Brazilian who

He continued with a hymn of praise for American prosperity: "We need 12 cities for the World Cup. America produced 33. All have international airports. All

HaveIange is an extremely impressive man. He made absolutely no effort to make a conquest of me: by friendliness, by oratory, or by charm. He simply, with great but unexaggerated cour-

Sport's chief charm may be discipline for Havelange. But for him, and for all the other men who rule their game, it has a still more wonderful thing to offer: sport represents one of the modern world's most magnificent vehicles for the undisputed exercise of pure, unalloyed, blatant, stark naked power.



Almost the last hope before Britain's team is finalised for the championships, to be held in Seville from March 8 to 10, may be on the one representative picked for the international match in Le Paris on February 23. Failing that, perhaps only Johan Boakes, who has been running in the United States, might be asked to spare British ignominy.

AMERICAN

First choice

It had been their plan to take it easy before and after Crystal Palace to keep themselves fresh for Europe. Now, finding themselves fresher than they had hoped, they have had to make do with one hastily rearranged training session on Wednesday night. As one club official put it:

Trowbridge in the Larchimage Windows Cup quarter-final second leg, and out 5-1 on aggregate. Trowbridge play Watcloooville or Hythe in the semi-finals and Tamworth meet Chelmsford City.

In the above reports, supplied by representatives of the Ski Club of Great Britain, I refers to lower slopes and II to upper, and art to artificial.

Lees, aged 32, who went into hospital last weekend, is in his third year as Cambridge coach, his contract ending after this year's boat race. Before joining Cambridge, he was a successful coach to Nottingham County and London University.

"We'll keep active until Chavez says yes," Duff said. "My aim is to keep him busy in the build-up."

Derek Angol, of Camberwell, proved too strong for Dave Garside, of Hartlepool, and added the vacant British title to his Commonwealth crown by

The draft was Steve Gabbard, and after choosing Tom Adams as their second choice, Billy Hicks, the general manager of the club, said: "Coach Larry Kennan and we are ecstatic about how this worked out."

The draft for offensive linemen is the first of ten taking

Gabbard and Paul Bernadelli, the fourth to be recruited, played in the American Bowl in 1989 for the Philadelphia Eagles. Adams, went to Berlin last year with the Los Angeles Rams, while Doug Marrone, their third choice, played at Wembley for the Miami Dolphins in 1988.

FOOTBALL

Barclays League

THIRD DIVISION: Postponed: Southend v Reading.

Fourth division

Cardiff v Gillingham _____

Northampton v York _____

Stockport v Torquay _____

RUGBY LEAGUE

SIX OUT CHALLENGE CUP: Salford v Batley.

SALOM LAGER ALLIANCE CHALLENGE CUP: First round: Bradford Northern v Wigan; Hull KR v Bramley; Oldham v Huddersfield; St Helens v Halifax; Sheffield Eagles v Doncaster; Warrington v Leigh.

RUGBY UNION

7.0 unless stated
CLUB MATCHES: Aberystwyth v Bridgend;
Aberllynny v Morriston; Barmouth v Llan-
Ffestiniog; Bournemouth v Salisbury (7.30);
Cardiff v Beddau Rangers (7.18); Gloucester
v Newport; Macclesfield v London Irish
(7.16); Northampton v Coventry; Penarth v

SURVICE Walsley visit world indoor
championship (Guthrie; Preston).
ICE HOCKEY: Heineken League; Premier
division; Durham v Ayr (8.0).
SWIMMING: British grand Prix meeting
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Today's television, page 21

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Today's television, page 21

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and M Symes (NZ) or T Scott and D Webb (Eng), 7-3, 5-7, 0-7, 7-1, 7-6, S Fles and J Price (Wales) or B Baldwin (NZ) and M McMahon (HQ, 7-4, 7-5, 3-7, 1-7, 7-8;

